



Among the 4,500 Finns in Belgium at the moment, the majority live in the Brussels area, working in the institutions of the European Union, in Finland's permanent representation to the EU, and in the regional offices of various organizations and Finnish industrial companies. The multicultural environment in Brussels, with almost half of the population being of foreign origin, stands in striking contrast to the almost mono-cultural Finland (4% immigrants).

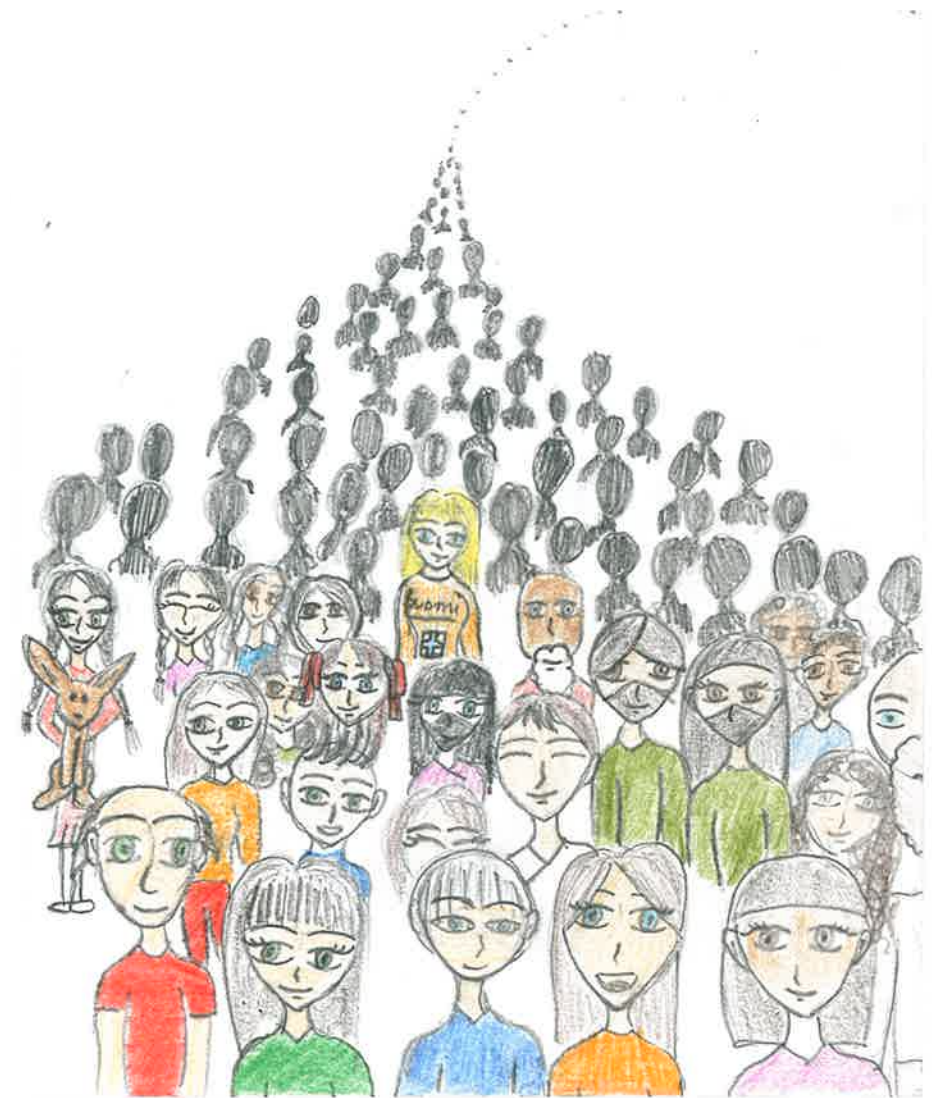
This study examined the adaptation of the Finnish expatriates and their spouses to Brussels' multicultural environment, the relationships between the different components of adaptation and values, and the role of empathy in the process of adaptation. The interview sample consisted of 52 participants. The study used a mixed-methods design and combined in-depth interviews with quantitative data on value priorities and aspects of empathy.

As a group, the expatriates stood out by their high regard for self-direction and work values and low regard for conformity and security when compared to similar highly educated samples in Finland. They also scored low on personal distress.

Five main dimensions that describe the process of adapting to the multicultural environment were identified from the interviews. These dimensions included broadmindedness and flexibility, which were mentioned in all interviews, as well as extraversion, self-efficacy and adventurousness. Positive adaptation was predicted by high regard for universalism and low regard for conformity, and by low personal distress and strong tendency to the perspective of other people.

"(the current work) ... provides a deeper understanding of the experience and processes through which expatriates are adapted into their host society"

Professor Lilach Sagiv, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem



FINNISH EXPATRIATES' ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses Finnish expatriates' adaptation to a multicultural environment. The study focuses on the role of individual values and empathy in adaptation, using Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee's (e.g., 2000) work on the multicultural personality as the frame of interpretation. The target group were Finnish expatriates and expatriate spouses (N=52) in Brussels. The method used was conversion mixed data analysis. Adaptation was studied with a semi-structured interview, where the respondents were also encouraged to talk freely about any issues that they felt were important concerning living abroad. The goal was to bring out the conceptions and understanding of the participants of the study themselves. This data was analysed mainly with grounded theory methods, applying also some techniques of interpretative phenomenological analysis. In this first phase the major interests were: 1) to find dimensions and other components of adaptation, and 2) to form types of adaptation. Dimensions refer to qualities and attributes the individuals either possess before moving or learn and gain while living abroad. In addition, any additional components affecting adaptation were searched. The types of adaptation were formed by examining main commonalities and differences between the respondents' answers. By classifying the respondents into different types I attempted to find out how individuals differed in their adaptation. The data in the second phase of the study was collected by means of Schwartz's Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 1999) and Davis's (1994) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). This data was related to the results of the first phase converted into numerical form by examining correlations between converted variables, values and empathy. The value rank order was compared to studies conducted in Finland with persons of similar education.

In the first phase five dimensions of adaptation were found: broadmindedness, flexibility, extroversion, self-efficacy and adventurousness. The dimensions were closely connected to each other. In addition, such competencies and concepts as fluency in the language of the country and social networks, and time spent abroad, were associated with certain dimensions. Based on two major axes, motivation and competencies, four types of adaptation were established: ideally adapted, positively adapting, ambiguously adapting, and not adapted. In the second phase the five dimensions were converted into numerical form, each dimension forming a bipolar category, following the initial continuums found in text analysis. Broadmindedness was divided into growing and extensive broadmindedness, flexibility into evolving and inclusive poles, and extroversion into striving and natural extrovert. Self-efficacy and adventurousness were coded as dummy variables as a function whether they were mentioned or not. The "not adapted"

group was discussed separately in the analysis, since it could not be included into the statistical analysis due to its small size.

Among the expatriates, universalism was the most important value, followed by self-direction. Conformity and security ranked lower than in the Finnish samples with a university-level education. Self-direction values were related to several dimensions of adaptation. Self-direction correlated with extensive broadmindedness, inclusive flexibility, natural extrovert, and adventurousness. Those categorized as ideally adapted also scored significantly higher on self-direction than the positively adapting or ambiguously adapting group. Universalism was related to inclusive flexibility, and the natural extrovert group had significantly lower scores on conformity than the striving extrovert group. Regarding empathy, the extensive broadmindedness group scored higher than the growing broadmindedness group on perspective taking. The natural extrovert group and the ideally adapted type had lower scores on personal distress.

Combining the results of both phases of the study, what stood out were the relevance of high priority for universalism and self-direction values, and low priority for conformity, as well as the significance of perspective taking and low personal distress in adaptation. The qualitative analysis was also consistent with the assumption that these values and aspects of empathy could change in the process of adaptation.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tutkimuksessa kartoitettiin suomalaisten ekspatriaattien sopeutumista monikulttuuriseen ympäristöön, Brysseliin. Bryssel asuinpaikkana poikkeaa huomattavasti Suomesta monikulttuurisen väestörakenteensa puolesta: Brysselissä lähes puolet (48%) väestöstä on ulkomaalaista alkuperää, kun Suomessa vastaava luku on alle 4%, ja Helsingissäkin vain hiukan yli 8%. Tutkimuksen aineisto koostui 52 haastattelusta sekä haastatelluille tehdystä arvo- ja empatiakyselystä. Tutkimuksessa yhdistettiin laadullinen ja tilastollinen tutkimustapa. Haastatteluista kartoitettiin sopeutumisen ulottuvuuksia ja erilaisia sopeutumistyyppejä. Näitä verrattiin kyselyaineistolla saatuihin arvo- ja empatiavastauksiin. Haastatteluissa sopeutumista tutkittiin kartoittamalla vastaajien jokapäiväistä elämää ja kokemuksia Brysselissä asumisesta.

Haastatteluaineiston avulla löydettiin viisi sopeutumisen ulottuvuutta. Ensimmäinen oli avarakatseisuus, jossa ilmenivät suvaitsevaisuus, perspektiivinottokyky ja erilaisuuden hyväksyntä. Toinen ulottuvuus oli joustavuus. Se vaihteli epävarmasta tai tilanteiden pakottamasta joustavuudesta kyvykkääseen tilannearviointiin ja kykyyn toimia vaivatta tilanteen vaatimalla tavalla. Joustavuuteen sisältyi myös kyky epävarmuuden sietoon ja harkitsevuus ennen toimimista. Kolmas ulottuvuus oli ulospäinsuuntautuneisuus, jonka toinen puoli ilmeni tietoisena pyrkimyksenä ulospäinsuuntautuneeseen käyttäytymiseen ja toinen luontaisena kykynä olla ulospäin suuntautunut. Neljäs ulottuvuus oli usko omaan itseen ja omiin kykyihin. Viidennen ulottuvuuden, seikkailunhalun, mainitsi noin neljännes haastatelluista.

Sopeutumisen tyypit määriteltiin motivaation ja taitojen perusteella neljään ryhmään. Ideaalisti sopeutuneet olivat motivoituneita sopeutumiseen, ja heillä oli myös taito toimia monikulttuurisessa ympäristössä. Positiivisesti sopeutuvat olivat motivoituneita sopeutumaan, mutta tunsivat, että heidän taidossaan toimia vaivatta vieraassa ympäristössä oli vielä kehittämistä. Ristiriitaisesti sopeutuvat epäröivät motivaatiotaan, mutta kuvasivat taitonsa toimia vieraassa ympäristössä hyviksi tai kohtalaisiksi. Ei- sopeutuneiden motivaatio ja taidot olivat muita heikompia. Ulottuvuuksien ja tyyppien lisäksi mm. maan kielitaito, kommunikointikyky ja sosiaaliset verkostot edesauttoivat sopeutumista. Nämä tekijät olivat myös yhteydessä tutkimuksen ulottuvuuksiin ja tyyppiluokitteluun. Lisäksi tulokset antoivat viitteitä siitä, että sopeutuminen monikulttuuriseen ympäristöön on vuosien, ei kuukausien, prosessi. Erityisesti avarakatseisuuden ja joustavuuden merkitys osoittautuivat tärkeiksi monikulttuurisessa ympäristössä, ja motivaation todettiin olevan perustava tekijä menestyksellisessä sopeutumisessa.

Arvoiltaan ekspatriaatit olivat kaikkien suomalaisten kaltaisia siinä, että luonnon ja kaikkien ihmisten hyvinvointiin liittyvät universalismiarvot olivat

heille kaikkein tärkeimpiä. Itseohjautuvuusarvot (vapaus ja omaperäisyys) olivat toiseksi tärkein arvotyyppi, kuten korkeasti koulutetuilla suomalaisilla yleensäkin. Työarvot olivat kolmannella sijalla, mikä on huomattavasti korkeampi kuin Suomessa yleensä. Yhdenmukaisuus ja turvallisuus olivat selkeästi vähemmän tärkeitä kuin vastaavissa tutkimuksissa Suomessa. Itseohjautuvuus oli yhteydessä lukuisiin sopeutumisen osatekijöihin. Universalismin korostus ja yhdenmukaisuuden vähäisempi arvostus näkyivät sekä tilastollisissa että laadullisissa tuloksissa. Empatian osa-alueista perspektiivinottotaipumus ja alhainen ahdistuvuus liittyivät sopeutumiseen johdonmukaisesti.

Tutkimuksessa käytetty laadullisen ja tilastollisen analyysin yhdistäminen on toistaiseksi melko harvinaista kulttuurienvälisessä ja sosiaalipsykologisessa tutkimuksessa. Menetelmän avulla kyettiin löytämään yksityiskohtaisesti monikulttuuriseen sopeutumiseen vaikuttavia tekijöitä ja niiden välisiä suhteita. Tutkimuksen tulosten avulla voidaan kehittää vastaisuudessa menetelmiä, joilla tulevien ekspatriaattien sopeutumista, kuten myös työkseen ulkomailla paljon matkustavien menestyksellistä toimintaa voidaan edesauttaa Brysselissä ja myös muissa monikulttuurisissa ympäristöissä.

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1 FINNISH EXPATRIATES' ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

1.1 ROOTS OF INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION STUDIES

Almost 40 years ago Adler wrote: "Increasing interaction across interpersonal, social, ethnic, national, and cultural barriers necessitates new understandings of the dynamics, the problems, and the implications of cross-cultural experiences" (Adler, 1975, 13). However, the roots of studies relating to intercultural contact go back to the beginning of the 20th century in the United States, albeit the studies of that epoch concentrated on medical records of immigrants' mental health, and the goals were sociopolitical (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001, 33-34). One of the earliest works discussing students' adjustment was Lysgaard's research in 1955, where he presented his pioneering U-curve hypothesis.¹ Since those days the studies of cross-cultural adaptation have expanded with regard to *who* is studied and *what* is studied in connection to cross-cultural encounters. Along with students, immigrants, Peace Corps volunteers, and missionaries, nowadays also expatriates, sojourners, free movers, refugees, asylum seekers and tourists are at the centre of studies. There are studies that concentrate on psychological factors, others on communication issues, some concern exclusively work efficacy, and many other issues. The core of the interest depends on the discipline, whether it is done from a sociological, economic, ethnographical, psychological or social psychological view, and the practical implications it offers. Adler's (1975) comment is still timely, and even more so in today's world, with the increasing amount of international and intercultural cooperation and the proliferation of economic coalitions.

1.2 BACKGROUND FOR THIS STUDY

In Europe the systematic cooperation between West European countries started after the Second World War in order to secure lasting peace. The European Coal and Steel Community was founded in 1950, being the cornerstone to unite European countries economically and politically. The six founders were Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. In 1957 the Treaty of Rome created the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom),

¹ Lysgaard (1955) conducted a study of Norwegian Fulbright scholars in the United States. He discovered that those having stayed abroad for 6-18 months had greater adjustment difficulties than either those who had stayed less than 6 months or those who had stayed over 18 months.

followed by the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960. Cooperation continued to create new treaties with different countries outside Europe, and European integration continued, with more countries joining the cooperation. In 1991 the European Union was founded and closer cooperation agreed upon with common foreign and security policies, justice and home affairs, and economic and monetary union, including the prospect of a single currency. Today, the European Union consists of 28 countries from Western Europe to the Eastern European border, and from North to South. Cooperation is recognized as crucial not only in keeping the peace but also to reassert a place and authority amongst the World's economic and political superpowers, such as the United States, Russia, and China. Therefore, successful cooperation in the European Union is vital to all member states. (The History of the European Union, 2013.)

The European Union has been at a turning point for the last decade due to its enlargement with new member states. Moreover, at the beginning of this decade the economic crisis has had a profound impact on relations between the member states. In this situation the future of European Union and which actions are taken will have a profound effect on the future of Europe. Brussels is the capital of Europe, and also the place where EU legislation is drafted. My main interest is how Finnish expatriates and their spouses adapt to life in Brussels. I suggest that by thorough investigation of this adaptation and its components, it is possible to tackle problematic issues in cross-cultural contacts and facilitate the cooperation and peaceful cohabitation of the European cultures, at least concerning Finnish expatriates, but possibly other nationalities as well. I chose to limit my research to Finnish expatriates and expatriate spouses for two reasons: First, there is little knowledge about *Finnish* expatriates' adaptation, and in particular their adaptation to a *multicultural* environment; and second, the knowledge and understanding of the cultural origin of the subjects of the study is a high priority when studying cross-cultural encounters (e.g. Knafo & Schwartz, 2001; Phinney, Ong & Madden, 2000; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 289-291). Being myself a Finn I have insider knowledge of the culture and the conceptual meanings of the expressions. Furthermore, I have been an expatriate spouse myself for almost two decades, which further facilitates my interpretation of other expatriates' and expatriate spouses' thoughts. One could say that I am broadly interested in European expatriates' adaptation to multicultural Europe, but I concentrate on Finns for practical reasons.

I have included both expatriates and expatriate spouses in this study. The choice was based on the presumption that the multicultural environment has similar effects with relation to both those who originally come to work (expatriates) as well as their spouses. The adaptation of spouses has also been proven to be pivotal not only in regard to adaptation of the spouses themselves, but also this influences the adaptability and work performance of the expatriates themselves (e.g. Arthur & Bennett, 1995).

The highly multicultural nature of the population in Brussels differs from Finland's rather homogeneous culture (see chapter 5). In Brussels about one third of the inhabitants have a nationality other than Belgian (Deboosere, Eggerickx, Van Hecke & Wayens, 2009), and a further 20% have changed their original nationality to become Belgian nationals (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009). In Finland only 3.6% of the population is of foreign nationality (Väestöliitto, 2012), and thus the effect of demographic multiculturalism on adaptation is one of the key points in this study. Adaptation to a multicultural environment can reflect the capacities and deficiencies of adaptation in a divergent manner than adaptation to a monocultural environment due to the variety of cultures one is in contact with.

Finland has been a member of the European Union since 1995, and this has drawn a substantial number of Finnish citizens and enterprises to Brussels. There are about 4,500 Finns in whole Belgium at the moment, of which the majority live in the Brussels area (Suomen suurlähetystö, Bryssel, 2013). Finns are working in Brussels in European Union institutions together with persons coming from 27 other member states. In addition, linked to the European Union, there is a permanent representation to the EU, and regional offices as well as representative offices of numerous instances, such as Finnish industries and Finnish Unions. About 50 Finnish enterprises are represented in Belgium, including Nokia, UPM-kymmene, Kone and Valio (Suomen suurlähetystö, Bryssel, 2013). Smooth adaptation of these expatriates and civil servants as well as the adaptation of their families is important to these individuals, and also to the profitability and success of their work performance, including the cooperation with other nationalities.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE AIMS OF THE STUDY

In the latest researches that study individuals moving temporarily abroad, some prefer to use the term expatriate (e.g. Ali, Van der Zee & Sanders, 2003; Selmer & Luring, 2009), whereas other researchers prefer the term sojourner (e.g. James, Hunsley, Navara & Alles, 2004; Masgoret, 2005). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the noun 'expatriate' and the abbreviation 'expat' means a person who lives in a foreign country, and the verb 'to expatriate' means moving to live in a foreign country, especially by choice. 'Sojourner' is defined as a temporary resident or a visitor, whereas 'immigrant' is used to refer to a person who migrates to another country as a settler. Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis & Sam (2011, 364) consider 'sojourner' to have an equivalent meaning to 'expatriate'. Yet another term used is 'free mover', which refers to the new forms of cross-border migration. Phalet & Kasic (2006) include to this category individuals who move to Brussels, London or Amsterdam in order to pursue a professional career in Europe. The term 'free movers' indeed applies to quite a few respondents in this study, but

since it does not apply to all individuals, I have chosen to use the term 'expatriate'.

The core interests of this study are Finnish expatriates' and expatriate spouses'² adaptation to Brussels' multicultural environment, the connection of values to different components of adaptation, and the role of empathy in the process of adaptation. In this study the research frame deviates from previous cross-cultural adaptation studies, amongst which quantitative methods are the most commonly used method to measure adaptation. I am studying adaptation to a multicultural environment through conceptualizing the target persons' own understanding of adaptation. Using this procedure I intend to bring new insights to the components of adaptation and to processes leading to adaptation. Values and empathy are studied using quantitative measures. Mixed methods are applied in order to combine the results.

I will briefly present four theoretical concepts that are the main interest of this study. They are multiculturalism, cross-cultural adaptation, individual values and empathy.

1.3.1 MULTICULTURALISM AND CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION

The concept of multiculturalism has at least three different definitions. First, multiculturalism can refer to a demographic composition, describing the polyethnic composition of a society. Second, multiculturalism can refer to a specific policy toward cultural diversity. Third, multiculturalism as a psychological concept refers to an attitude of accepting and supporting the culturally heterogeneous composition of the population of a society, (Van de Vijver, Breugelmans & Schalk-Soekar, 2008). When I discuss the multicultural nature of Brussels in this study, I refer to the demographic composition.

Multiculturalism has been studied from a number of different perspectives. Berry's (1997, 2001) work on acculturation strategies concerns individuals, and acculturation policies deal with societies. Acculturation strategies describe to what extent immigrants maintain their own ethnic heritage and to what extent they adapt to the settlement culture. Acculturation policies describe the intergroup relations and government policies in plural societies. Attitudes toward multiculturalism have received at least as much attention as acculturation (see e.g. Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010; Leong & Ward, 2006; Schalk-Soekar, Van der Vijver & Hoogsteder, 2004; Zick, Wagner, Van Dick & Petzel, 2001). The effects of multicultural environments on individuals have been investigated especially in studies on identity (e.g. Chen, Benet-Martinez & Bond, 2008; Sparrow, 2000).

² In the following chapters, I will briefly refer only to expatriates, subsuming expatriate spouses into the same concept, except when the division is required in order to discuss differences.

In cross-cultural studies that concentrate on *adaptation*, various factors or dimensions are usually proposed to describe different parts of adaptation (reviewed in chapter 2). The most commonly used division is Ward and her colleagues' (e.g. Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1999) division into psychological and sociocultural adaptation. While some studies concentrate exclusively on either one of them (e.g. Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001; Masgoret, 2005), quite often both aspects are included in the same model or theory (e.g. Adler, 1975; Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978).

Regarding studies of adaptation to a cross-cultural environment and the factors and competencies needed for adaptation, little has been said about the multicultural environment as a place of settlement. Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2000, 2001) multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ) and its dimensions is one of the few which refers explicitly to adaptation to a *multicultural* environment. Therefore, the results concerning adaptation in the present study primarily refer to the multicultural personality questionnaire's factors. Even though other studies and theories concerning adaptation do not discuss multiculturalism in particular, the best known of them are reviewed in the theoretical part. This is done in order to be able to point out possible general similarities that are found in this study, and their relation to cross-cultural studies in general.

1.3.2 VALUES AND EMPATHY IN ADAPTATION

Schwartz and his colleagues (e.g. Fischer & Schwartz, 2011) have defined individual values as "abstract beliefs about desirable goals, ordered by relative importance, that guide individuals as they evaluate events, people, and actions" (p. 1128).³ The studies have shown that values are connected to personality (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994; Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz & Knafo, 2002), to the choices individuals make in their lives (Boneva & Frieze, 2001; Schwartz, 2005), to people's motivations (Tartakovsky & Schwartz, 2001) and also to social contacts (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995). Value priorities also change along with life circumstances and life experiences (Bardi, Lee, Hofmann-Towfigh & Soutar, 2009; Bardi & Goodwin, 2011; Rohan, 2000). In cross-cultural studies the individual values have been connected to several issues: motivations to emigrate (Boneva & Frieze, 2001; Tartakovsky & Schwartz, 2001); display rules within cultures (Koopman-Holm & Matsumoto, 2011); individuals' styles of communication in different cultures (Gudykunst et al. 1996); and multicultural personality questionnaire dimensions (Bobowik, Van Oudenhoven, Basabe, Telletxea & Páez, 2011). As the move to a foreign environment is a major life change, it can be presumed to affect individual

³ Schwartz's theory of individual values (1992) and confluences with cross-cultural studies are presented in chapter 3.

values. In addition to values rank order with expatriates, I want to investigate how individual values are connected to different components of adaptation in order to further illuminate different aspects of adaptation.

Another focus of this study is empathy and its connection to adaptation. The concept of empathy is included in all the best-known adaptation theories. Davis's (1994) model of empathy⁴ describes four different aspects of empathy, of which two can be considered similar to various descriptions of empathy found in cross-cultural adaptation theories. These two aspects are perspective taking and personal distress. For example in Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman's (2003) intercultural development inventory the fifth orientation is "the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture" (p. 425), describing the same issue as perspective taking. In Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2000, 2001) multicultural personality questionnaire, the third factor is emotional balance, the reverse counterpart of Davis's (1994) personal distress. Despite the similarities in Davis's aspects of empathy and cross-cultural adaptation studies, I failed to find any cross-cultural studies where empathy would have been studied with Davis's empathy questionnaire. Since Davis's (1994) empathy model fits conceptually well to the adaptation research, I chose to include this empathy measurement scale in this study.

1.4 THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The theoretical part of the dissertation begins with the presentation of the best known cross-cultural encounter studies. The division of cross-cultural theories and studies into affective, behavioural and cognitive components applied by Ward et al. (2001) is used in my review (chapter 2). I then proceed to discuss Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2001) multicultural personality questionnaire dimensions and compare them with other studies on cross-cultural adaptation. Moreover, I bring up further studies of adaptation and concepts that are widely discussed in cross-cultural research. Next I proceed to discuss Schwartz's (1992) theory of individual values (chapter 3). I present how the individual values have been shown to be linked to different issues such as behaviour, personality and life circumstances. I pay special attention to how Schwartz's (1992) theory of individual values has been applied in cross-cultural studies. Cultural values by Hofstede (1980, 2001) are reviewed briefly with regard to differences between Belgium and Finland, later discussed in chapter 5. In chapter 4 I present Davis's (1994) model of empathy and contemplate its similarities with various adaptation theories.

⁴ Davis's (1994) model of empathy and conceptual connections to adaptation theories are discussed in chapter 4.

As the subjects of this study are Finnish expatriates who live in Brussels and its surroundings, in chapter 5 these two places, the place of origin and that of settlement, are discussed. I present the background information of the two places and compare the differences and similarities. In chapter 6 I present the research questions. In chapter 7 I proceed to methods of the study. The results are divided into two chapters. Chapter 8 consists of qualitative results, which is the first phase of the analyses. In chapter 9, the second phase of the study, mixed methods are included, as the results of the first phase as well as value and empathy data are studied. In chapter 10 the results of both phases are combined and inferences are presented. In chapter 11, the discussion, I bring together the results of this dissertation and compare them to the current literature. I also propose further topics for future research based on this study.

My intention is to map the adaptation to multicultural environment from a new point of view in order to gain further knowledge of the subject. In the future this information can help to improve and facilitate the adaptation of future expatriates. As has been shown, advance information and briefing can substantially help the adaptation process (e.g. Ward et al., 2001; Bhawuk, Landis & Lo, 2006). Moreover, the results of this study add knowledge concerning how to act and behave in a multicultural environment, and the competencies needed in the process. This knowledge can be helpful not only to individuals residing in this environment, but also to people visiting the place, especially if they attend international meetings and committees. Regarding values, my aim is to show the individual values' connection to adaptation to a multicultural environment, as well as their significance concerning different components of adaptation. Furthermore, I intend to show the relevance of various components of empathy in adaptation to a multicultural environment. From a theoretical point of view, I intend to find both dimensions of adaptation as well as types of adaptation based on the experiences of the research subjects themselves. By dimensions I denote characteristics and competencies that facilitate and are part of the adaptation process in a multicultural environment. Different types describe how individuals of this study differ from each other in adaptation. And finally, my intention is to examine how the concepts introduced in quantitative studies (several adaptation theories that will be discussed, Schwartz's theory of values, and Davis's model of empathy) are applicable to the qualitative and mixed methods research.

2 STUDIES OF INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION

2.1 FROM ACCULTURATION TO ADAPTATION

A plethora of cross-cultural studies have been conducted to find out how individuals adapt to foreign environments. Sam & Berry (2006) state the basic acculturation question in cross-cultural psychology: “How do people born and raised in one society manage to live in another society that is culturally different from the one they are used to?” (p. 3). The term acculturation, former often mixed with assimilation, refers to the process of acculturation into a different cultural environment (Sam, 2006). The term adaptation has been used interchangeably with other terms like adjustment and accommodation, and is often confused with acculturation (Searle & Ward, 1990). According to Berry (2006b), the term *adaptation* refers to the relatively stable changes that have happened to an individual (or group) in response to external demands. In other words, for Berry adaptation is the outcome of acculturation (Berry, 2006b). However, Ward and her colleagues use the terms adjustment and adaptation when describing the factors and process of adaptation (e.g. Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

Acculturation and adaptation to a foreign environment have been studied under numerous concepts and from different points of views, accentuating different parts of the process or its outcomes. Studies in this line have been subsumed, for example, under cross-cultural adaptation or adjustment, intercultural competence, intercultural communication competence (referring to the communication part of adaptation), intercultural effectiveness, cultural intelligence, etc. Change at the individual level in the acculturation process involves affective, behavioural and cognitive changes (Ward et al., 2001). The target group of the studies varies as much as the terms used in the literature. Berry has concentrated in his work on immigrants, while Ward and colleagues have mainly studied university exchange students. Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001; Van Oudenhoven, Van der Zee & Kooten, 2001) have studied expatriates and expatriate spouses, but have also done studies on students (e.g. Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002). Yet other groups studied in cross-cultural acculturation and adaptation include, for instance, refugees and tourists (e.g. Berry et al., 2011; Ward et al., 2001). I will begin by reviewing the best known adaptation theories and then proceed to the latest literature with a special focus on multiculturalism.

2.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL ADAPTATION

Adaptation is usually divided into *psychological* and *sociocultural* adaptation,⁵ a distinction first introduced and later validated by Ward and colleagues (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward, 1996; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). The division is widely accepted and used in cross-cultural studies in general.⁶ Psychological adaptation refers to the emotional/affective domain and largely involves individual psychological and physical well-being, while sociocultural adaptation is related to the behavioural domain, describing the ability to manage daily life in a new cultural milieu, the acquisition of culturally appropriate skills and the ability to interact smoothly (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Conceptually, these two forms are distinct, but empirically they have been shown to be significantly related (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). However, they usually have different time courses and varying experiential predictors. Psychological problems have been noticed to increase soon after moving to a new environment, followed usually by a general but varied decrease over time; sociocultural adaptation typically improves linearly with time.⁷ Studies have shown that good psychological adaptation is predicted by personality variables, life-change events, coping styles and social support, while socio-cultural adaptation is predicted by cultural knowledge, degree of contact, and positive inter-group attitudes (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Both aspects of adaptation are usually predicted by the successful pursuit of the integration acculturation strategy, and by minimal cultural distance (Ward & Kennedy, 1993a). The correlation between psychological and sociocultural adaptation has been discovered to be greater when living in a culturally proximal vs. culturally distant environment (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999).

It is noteworthy that adaptation may or may not improve the “fit” between the individual and his/her environment. Berry (2006b) has written: “Adaptation is an outcome that may or may not be positive in valence (i.e. meaning only well-adapted). Thus, long-term adaptation to acculturation is highly variable, ranging from well-adapted to poorly adapted: varying from a

⁵ Aycan & Berry (1996) have proposed *economic adaptation* as a third adaptive outcome. This refers to obtaining work in a new culture, and the degree to which this work is satisfying and effective. However, this third form of adaptation is not widely used in studies concerning adaptation.

⁶ In addition to the widely used division between psychological and sociocultural adjustment, expatriate adjustment is divided in a number of studies into 1) adjustment to the general environment, 2) adjustment to interaction with host nationals, and 3) adjustment to work (e.g. Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Harrison, Chadwick & Scales, 1996; Hechanova, Beehr & Christiansen, 2003). Of these, work adjustment is seen in most studies as a separate form of adjustment and dealt with as such. Especially interaction adjustment correlates with work adjustment, but in most cases in studies that concentrate on adaptation to living in a new cultural environment, work-related issues are not discussed.

⁷ In earlier studies adaptation was proposed to follow a U-shaped curve, first introduced by Lysgaard (1955). Oberg's (1960) stages of cross-cultural adaptation followed the same pattern. However, the U-curve concept has not been supported by longitudinal studies and its existence has been challenged (see e.g. Church, 1982; Ward, Okura, Kennedy & Kojima, 1998).

situation where individuals can manage their new lives very well, to one where they are unable to carry on in the new society” (pp. 52-53).

2.3 THE ABCS OF ACCULTURATION

Psychological adaptation has been seen to be best explained in terms of stress and coping framework, while sociocultural adaptation is best understood with culture learning approach (e.g. Berry, 2006b; Ward et al., 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The *stress and coping approach* refers to the core assumption that culture contact is inherently stressful (Ward et al., 2001). These studies include e.g. Berry’s acculturative stress model (1970, 1997, 2006b) and different coping theories, like Folkman and Lazarus’s (1985) coping strategies. According to Ward & Kennedy (1999) the *culture learning approach* emphasizes “the acquisition of culture-specific skills, behavioral dimensions of adaptation to change, and the significance of intercultural interactions” (p.673). In Ward, Bochner & Furnham’s (2001) *The Psychology of Culture Shock* the authors identified three main areas of individual change during acculturation, referring to these as “ABCs of acculturation”. These are the affective, behavioural and cognitive aspects of the acculturation process. The main theoretical perspectives on how individuals manage the acculturation process are, respectively, 1) the stress and coping approach, highlighting the affective perspective 2) the cultural learning approach, dealing with behavioural components and 3) social identification orientation, which discusses the cognitive aspects of acculturation.

2.3.1 THE STRESS AND COPING APPROACH

Berry (1997, 2006b) first introduced the term *acculturative stress*, indicating those changes that generate stress in the acculturation process. According to Berry (1997) the concept of stress denotes here physiological and emotional reactions to conditions of living, a definition borrowed from Lazarus (1990). The term stress is based on studies how people deal with negative experiences (stressors) by engaging in various coping strategies, leading eventually to some form of adaptation (Berry, 2006b). People are seen as potentially able to deal efficiently with stressors and achieve outcomes (adaptations), whether the outcomes are positive or negative. Berry (2006b) has written he prefers the term acculturative stress rather than Oberg’s (1960) *culture shock*, though he acknowledges that it has a broadly similar meaning. However, he sees the term shock implying that only difficulties will result from culture contact, whereas the acculturative stress theory points out that acculturation experiences can be advantageous, providing opportunities and stimulating experiences. Berry (1997, 2006b) also prefers the term acculturative rather than culture, referring with this to the fact that stressful experiences happen

in the interaction between two cultures instead of considering that only one culture affects the process.

Psychological acculturation stems from the experience of having to deal with two cultures in contact, and having to participate to various extents in both of them (Berry, 1997). According to Berry (1997), acculturative stress appears when moderate difficulties are experienced during acculturation. If acculturation is rather easy and only small psychological changes are needed, *behavioural shifts* may be sufficient and acculturative stress may not occur. However, this also requires some *culture shedding*: the unlearning of aspects of one's behaviour that are no longer appropriate. It is also accompanied by some *culture conflict*, meaning that incompatible behaviours create difficulties for the individual (Berry, 1997). On the other hand, when changes in the cultural context exceed the individual's capacities to cope, serious psychological disturbances, such as clinical depression or incapacitating anxiety may occur (Berry, 1997). As individuals deal with these experiences that they feel as problematic in acculturation, they can be seen as choosing different kinds of *coping strategies*. In coping theories Folkman and Lazarus (1985) drew distinctions between *problem-focused* (attempts to change or solve the problem) and *emotion-focused* (attempts to regulate the emotions associated with the problem) coping styles. Cross (1995) made a distinction between *primary and secondary coping strategies*. Primary strategies imply changing the environment to suit the self, whereas secondary strategies reflect changing the self to suit the environment. Cross (1995) argued that people in individualistic cultures prefer primary coping strategies and people from collectivist cultures prefer secondary strategies. This proposition has been questioned, though, to some extent (e.g. Ward et al., 2001, 78-79).

2.3.2 THE CULTURE LEARNING APPROACH

The culture learning approach examines the behavioural dimensions of acculturation. It highlights communication competence and language learning, and refers to sociocultural adaptation as an outcome (Masgoret & Ward, 2006). The theory is based on the assumption that cross-cultural problems arise because individuals have difficulties in managing everyday social encounters in a new social milieu (Furnham & Bochner, 1982.). The traditional line of studies concerns cultural differences in communication styles, norms and values (e.g. Gudykunst, 1993; Hammer et al., 1978; Kim, 1977), and theories are still being developed (e.g. Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001; Oguri & Gudykunst, 2002; Kim, 2008). Another recent line of work by Ward and colleagues has emphasized sociocultural adaptation, called *cultural fit* (e.g. Ward, Leong & Low, 2004). This approach accentuates the ability to negotiate the interactive aspects of life in a new cultural milieu, and take into account the interaction of personality and situational factors (e.g. Searle &

Ward, 1990; Ward & Chang, 1997; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). All in all, sociocultural adaptation refers to the ability to fit in, not only through language proficiency and communication competence, but also through adaptation to new ecologies, norms, values and worldviews (Masgoret & Ward, 2006).

Language proficiency and communication competence are seen to work reciprocally in effective intercultural interaction, leading to sociocultural adaptation (Masgoret & Ward, 2006). Language proficiency has a straightforward relationship to sociocultural adjustment. As one learns the language of a new society, interaction with the host community increases, leading to better adaptation and fewer adjustment problems (Ward & Kennedy, 1993b). Competent communication also includes numerous aspects of nonverbal communication, such as culture-specific gestures, facial expressions, body postures, expressions of emotion, greetings, forms of address, use of silence and interpersonal space, just to mention a few (Masgoret & Ward, 2006; Ward et al. 2001, 53-61). Nordic people, for example, have been found out to make little use of gestures compared to expressive Latin cultures, and Southern Europeans and Latin American people have smaller interpersonal space and frequent physical contact, especially compared to East Asian people (Masgoret & Ward, 2006).

2.3.3 SOCIAL IDENTIFICATION ORIENTATION

Ward et al. (2001) see the origins of social identification theories in two related bodies of theory and research: 1) studies on identity and acculturation and 2) Tajfel's (1978) Social Identity Theory (SIT) applied to cross-cultural research. Ethnic or cultural identity is the central concept in these theories, and the relation between self-definition and group membership is studied along with intergroup processes and dynamics (Ward et al., 2001, 98).

Berry's (1974, 1997, 2006a) model of the acculturation process is probably the most recognized and used categorical approach in cross-cultural studies concerning identity. The model describes to what degree an individual simultaneously participates in the cultural life of a new society and adapts to its customs and culture, and to what degree one maintains one's original cultural identity. In situations where individuals have freedom of choice, the four acculturation strategies are defined as follows: 1) Assimilation is the strategy when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity, seek daily interaction with other cultures and adopt the cultural values, norms and traditions of the new society. 2) Separation strategy refers to holding on to one's original culture and avoiding interaction with members of the new culture. 3) Integration is the strategy when individuals have both an interest in maintaining their own culture, and at the same time have daily interactions with other groups. 4) Marginalization is defined when there is little interest, or

possibility, in cultural maintenance, and little interest in having relations with other groups. (Berry, 2006a.)

In his social identity theory Tajfel (1978) defined three major features of social identity: 1) It is part of the self-concept; 2) it requires awareness of membership in a group; and 3) it has evaluative and emotional significance. Social identification studies are based on social categorization and social comparison. The group that an individual regards himself as belonging to is the in-group, and the other groups to which this group is compared to are the out-groups. It is recognized that the division into in-groups and out-groups exists; they are compared, and comparisons, whether favourable or unfavourable, have consequences for self-esteem. Along with social identity theory abundant research has been conducted investigating social, cultural, ethnic or national identity and acculturation. Since this line of theories would require a whole book to be presented, I will only review here a few studies and articles that might prove interesting concerning the study at hand.

Liebkind (2006) has drawn attention to the concept of ethnic identity, which has sometimes been confused with social identity, or has been treated simply as the ethnic component of social identity. Social identity derives from the social position of one's membership group, whereas ethnic identity "refers to an individual's sense of self in terms of membership in a particular ethnic group" (Liebkind, 2006, 78).

Integrated identity, also called bicultural identity refers to the situation where identification is strong both with the ethnic group and with the new larger society. It has usually been shown to be the most successful acculturation strategy, leading to most psychologically adaptive outcomes (e.g. Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006; Chen et al., 2008; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001). In the study by Phinney et al. (2001) the authors proposed a model investigating the interactions between ethnic and national⁸ identities and adaptation to the new society, taking into account both the attitudes and characteristics of immigrants, as well as the responses of the receiving society. Moderating factors, such as gender, age at time of migration, and generation of migration help in understanding the situational variations in the acculturation process. The authors accentuated the fact that different identity categories (assimilated, separated, marginalized, integrated) vary not only between groups but also in different settings, such as schools or ethnic neighbourhoods (Phinney et al., 2001).

Snauwaert, Soenens, Vanbeselaere & Boen (2003) demonstrated in their research on Moroccan and Turkish immigrants in Belgium that neither adoption of the host culture's habits (adoption acculturation orientation) nor identification with Belgians (identification acculturation orientation) was connected to contacts with Belgians (contact acculturation orientation). They

⁸ National identity refers to identification with the new society (Phinney et al. 2001), including feelings of belonging to, and attitudes toward, the larger society (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997, in Phinney et al. 2001).

could show that the majority of both Moroccans and Turkish immigrants regarded intercultural contacts with Belgians as important but they did not adopt the Belgian culture nor identified with Belgians (Snauwaert et al., 2003). In other words, it is important to make clear distinctions between different conceptualizations of acculturation orientations.

2.4 NEW APPROACHES TO INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION

In the new millennium several new approaches to intercultural adaptation have been developed. These include, for instance, the multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ) developed by Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001), the intercultural adjustment potential scale (ICAPS) by Matsumoto et al. (2001), cultural intelligence (CQ) by Earley and Ang (2003) and cultural frame shifting by Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martinez (2000). The multicultural personality questionnaire is a multidimensional instrument aimed at measuring multicultural effectiveness with five factors: cultural empathy, open-mindedness, emotional stability, social initiative, and flexibility (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). The authors define multicultural effectiveness encompassing both successful operating within a foreign environment as well as feelings of psychological well-being in that environment⁹ (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). The intercultural adjustment potential scale is defined by Matsumoto and his colleagues as an instrument that can *predict* adjustment by measurement of four constructs: emotion regulation, openness, flexibility, and critical thinking (Matsumoto, LeRoux, Robles & Campos, 2007). The cultural intelligence theory refers to individual capacities that enable individuals to be effective across and within cultures (MacNab & Worthley, 2012). It consists of three components (cognitive, motivation, and behaviour) and entails the idea that cultural intelligence skills can be taught to individuals (MacNab & Worthley, 2012). Cultural frame shifting denotes the ability to shift between two culturally based interpretative lenses in response to cues in different environments (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee & Morris, 2002). It was developed to “capture how bicultural individuals switch between cultural lenses”¹⁰ (Hong et al., 2000, 709). Some of these approaches involve the idea of combining the personality factors that are important to intercultural adjustment with traits and behaviour in intercultural settings, also described as the inclusion of “person-situation” interactions (Berry et al., 2011, 367).

⁹ The multicultural personality questionnaire is presented more extensively in chapter 2.4.1.

¹⁰ There is more about cultural frame shifting in chapter 2.4.4.

2.4.1 MULTICULTURAL PERSONALITY

In earlier studies personality factors have been found to have an impact both on psychological and sociocultural adaptation (e.g. Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). The multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ) was developed to describe factors¹¹ in multicultural effectiveness (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). According to the authors, the definition of multicultural effectiveness does not only encompass successful operating within a new culture and work environment, but also personal adjustment and intercultural relations. Van Oudenhoven, Mol and Van der Zee (2003) have made a note that the dimensions describe both psychological and sociocultural adaptation, a distinction formulated by Ward and colleagues (e.g. Searle & Ward, 1990). The dimensions have also been shown to be linked to acculturation strategies defined by Berry (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2001).

The multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ) scales were chosen to be the principal instrument to which the results of the present study are compared. This is due to several reasons: The MPQ has several contact points to two other interests of this study, namely values and empathy. It has also been validated by several studies and is gaining a growing interest as a useful tool to measure intercultural adaptation and effectiveness (e.g. Leong, 2007; Van Oudenhoven, et al., 2003; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2001; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001; Yakunina, Weigold, I, Weigold, A., Hercegovac & Elsayed, 2012). The MPQ has been validated in both expatriate studies as well as in studies of spouses (Ali et al., 2003). The authors also showed that MPQ factors were significantly better predictors of multicultural activity and success than the Big Five¹² factors, presuming this to be due to the fact that MPQ has been specifically designed to measure multicultural effectiveness (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). In fact, the MPQ factors refer more widely to the dimensions of multicultural effectiveness than just personality traits, and it has been shown to be a useful tool in both cross-cultural training and measuring cross-cultural adaptation (e.g. Berry et al., 2011; Herfst, Van Oudenhoven & Timmermann, 2008; Leong, 2007; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2001). The MPQ has also been shown to be a particularly useful tool to measure adaptation in *multicultural contexts* (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002).

The MPQ factors are based on the dimensions of adaptation discussed in previous cross-cultural studies, so that items that had appeared consistently across studies were chosen (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Therefore, their validity as such had already been proven. The initial seven factors form five dimensions (four dimensions in the first study) of the multicultural effectiveness theory: cultural empathy, open-mindedness,

¹¹ Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001) use the terms factor, scale and dimension interchangeably in describing the aspects of the MPQ. The MPQ factors are also called traits in some studies (e.g. Bobowik et al., 2011).

¹² The Big Five factors are briefly reviewed later in this chapter.

emotional stability, social initiative, and flexibility (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). These five factors will be described next, mentioning each factor's connection to other theories of cross-cultural adaptation.

1) *Cultural empathy* describes “the ability to emphasize with feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of individuals from a different cultural background” (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 294). This dimension has also been named sensitivity (Hawes & Kealey, 1981) and intuition sensitivity (Gardner, 1962). Ward & Kennedy (1999) named the first factor of sociocultural adaptation as cultural empathy and relatedness, where cultural empathy is seen as being related to cognition and refers to “understanding local perspectives, values and world views” (p. 670). Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven (2000) have studied the MPQ's dimensions' correlations with the Big Five personality variables. The Big Five personality factors are neuroticism (encompassing facets of anxiety, fear and depression), conscientiousness (including competence, order, dutifulness, self-discipline), agreeableness (trust, altruism, compliance, modesty, tender-mindedness), openness to experience (willingness to try different activities, intellectual curiosity) and extraversion (energy, interpersonal sociability) (McCrae, 1991). The authors found cultural empathy to be associated with both extraversion and agreeableness (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Extraversion has been found to be significantly associated to sociocultural adaptation, and agreeableness to both psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Ward et al., 2004). Caligiuri (2000) found, likewise, a strong relationship between both extraversion and agreeableness and expatriate success.

2) *Open-mindedness* refers to “an open and unprejudiced attitude toward different groups and toward different cultural norms and values” (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001, 279). Originally open-mindedness and cultural empathy formed a single factor, but were soon separated to be individual dimensions, cultural empathy referring to the ability to empathize, and open-mindedness to having an open mind toward different cultures. Arthur & Bennett (1995, 107) described the similar dimension as ‘extra-cultural openness’, and Mendenhall and Oddou's (1985) third dimension of expatriate acculturation, named the perceptual dimension, has a close resemblance to open-mindedness. The perceptual dimension entails the ability to understand and perceive different ways of behaviour in a new cultural environment. Matsumoto et al. (2001) have a similar factor in their intercultural adjustment potential scale (ICAPS), named openness. Church (1982) described the same issue in his review as an “increased ability to view problems from multiple perspectives” (p.558). Adler (1975) described adaptation to a new cultural milieu, where “transitional experience is a movement from a state of low self- and cultural awareness to a state of high self- and cultural awareness” (p. 15). Open-mindedness was found to be strongly related to the Big Five factor openness to experience (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). An interesting finding was that some studies have failed to relate the Big Five

openness to intercultural adjustment (Ward et al., 2004; see also Caligiuri, 2000), although many authors have stressed the association. Ang, Van Dyne & Koh (2006) found openness to experience to be “a crucial personality factor that is significantly related to a person’s capacity to function effectively when interacting with those who have different cultural backgrounds” (p. 100). Arthur and Bennett (1995) named extra-cultural openness one of the five main factors in succeeding in international assignment, and Gardner (1962, 248) stated that the value system which included the “value of all men” was one of the five characteristics of the “universal communicator”.

3) *Emotional stability* implies the tendency to remain calm in stressful situations (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). As could be expected, it was found to be negatively related to neuroticism in Big Five, and again, neuroticism was found to be negatively connected to both psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Ward et al., 2004). Caligiuri (2000) found the Big Five emotional stability to be positively related to expatriates’ desire to remain in the assignment. In Mendenhall & Oddou’s (1985) dimensions of expatriate acculturation, the self-oriented dimension describing self-confidence and stress reduction corresponds to the same idea. Hammer et al. (1978) described the same issue with the ability to deal with psychological stress, e.g. frustration and anxiety, and Arthur & Bennett’s (1995) flexibility/adaptability factor entails the idea of emotional stability. In Gardner’s (1962, 248) universal communicator the same quality was described as “an unusual degree of integration, or stability”.

4) *Social initiative* refers to a tendency to approach social situations in an active way and to take initiatives (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). It was originally formed of two distinct scales, *orientation to action* and *extraversion*. Orientation to action is described by the authors as “the courage to take action or to make things happen” (2001, 279). Extraversion refers to the ability to establish and maintain contacts, hereby including communication skills. The social initiative dimension was found to correlate with the Big Five extraversion (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000) and a similar dimension is described widely in other studies (e.g. Arthur & Bennett, 1995; Black et al., 1991; Gardner, 1962; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985), being also a cornerstone of sociocultural adaptation. In the widely referred research of Hammer et al. (1978) two of the three dimensions of intercultural effectiveness resemble this dimension, namely the ability to communicate effectively and the ability to establish interpersonal relationships.

5) *Flexibility* describes the tendency to regard new and unknown situations as a challenge and to adjust one’s behaviour to the demands of new and unknown situations (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001). This dimension contains two scales, named *flexibility* and *adventurousness*. Flexibility refers to the ability to switch from one strategy or way of behaviour to another, because the familiar ways will not necessarily work in a new cultural environment. Adventurousness was defined by the authors as “a tendency to

actively search and explore new situations and to regard them as challenge” (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 294). The tolerance of ambiguity, frequently mentioned in other studies (e.g. Ruben, 1976), is included in this dimension (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). The flexibility-dimension can be found in Matsumoto and his colleagues’ (2001) ICAPS scale, Arthur and Bennett’s (1995) research, as well as implicitly in Mendenhall and Oddou’s (1985) perceptual dimension.

The five dimensions of MPQ have been shown to be related to feelings of self-efficacy, health, well-being, and performance in international contexts (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002; Yakunina et al., 2012). The concept of *self-efficacy* has been widely discussed in cross-cultural studies and its significance in itself has been pondered and studied. Self-efficacy does have contact points with MPQ, but the concept in itself does not fit entirely into the dimensions of a multicultural personality. In other words, it might have some additional perspectives, so I shall review the concept and its role in cross-cultural studies more closely.

2.4.2 SELF-EFFICACY

Self-efficacy is related to self-concept and social learning theory and is defined by Bandura (1977) as: “the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes” (p.193). This definition of self-efficacy is most commonly used in studies of cross-cultural adaptation. I shall start by briefly referring to Bandura’s (1977, 1997) description of self-efficacy and its connection to behavioural change, and turn then to cross-cultural studies where self-efficacy is present directly or indirectly. The concept of self-efficacy can be found in both earlier studies as well as in recent ones.

The concept of self-efficacy does not refer to the actual capacities of an individual, but to one’s *belief* in one’s capacities (Bandura, 1997). According to the author, expectations of personal efficacy are derived from four sources of information: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological states. The first is *mastery experiences*, also called *performance accomplishments*. This refers to successful performance, which increases self-efficacy, and enhanced self-efficacy tending to be generalized to other situations. So successful accomplishment and self-efficacy work in two ways. On the other hand, failure in accomplishing a task may lead to diminished self-efficacy. Bandura writes that once self-efficacy has been strengthened with successful performance, the negative impact of occasional failure is likely to be reduced and occasional failure can even strengthen the motivation to overcome failure (Bandura, 1977). The author regards the mastery experiences to be the most influential source of self-efficacy, because “they provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can muster whatever it takes to succeed” (Bandura, 1997, 80). The second source of self-

efficacy is *vicarious experience* or *social observation*. This refers to observing others perform activities similar to one's own and especially seeing others succeeding in them (Bandura, 1977). The third source is *verbal persuasion*. Bandura (1977) accentuates that it is important to persuade that one possesses the capabilities to master difficult situation instead of only giving performance aid. On the other hand, it is not sufficient to only raise one's expectations of success if the conditions for successful performance are scarce. So in verbal persuasion both raising an individual's expectations of personal competence and giving aid to perform successfully are needed. The fourth source of self-efficacy is *physiological states* or *emotional arousal*. According to Bandura (1977): "Emotional arousal is another constituent source of information that can affect perceived self-efficacy in coping with threatening situations" (p. 198). If anxiety arousal can be diminished in a threatening situation, it will help the individual have a mastery experience. Bandura writes that along with diminishing arousal, effective coping skills should be taught to help an individual proficient ways of handling problematic situations. He continues that fears and deficits are often interdependent: avoidance of stressful situations impedes development of coping skills, and lack of coping skills leads to further fear of failure.

2.4.3 SELF-EFFICACY IN CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES

The significance of mastery experiences in cross-cultural adaptation is easy to see when one looks at Bandura's texts. He explains that instead of adopting ready-made habits, the development of self-efficacy through mastery experiences "involves acquiring the cognitive, behavioral, and self-regulatory tool for creating and executing appropriate courses of action to manage ever-changing life circumstances" (1997,3).

As can already be noticed, self-efficacy and its sources have similarities with several multicultural personality factors described above. Mastery experiences can be compared to MPQ's social initiative, and emotional arousal to emotional stability, a concept mentioned in numerous studies. Mak & Tran (2001) compare mastery experiences in cross-cultural contexts to mastering intercultural social interactions; vicarious experiences to watching other foreigners successful social performance in new cultural setting; verbal persuasion to obtaining encouragement and positive feedback for one's own performance in a new cultural milieu; and emotional arousal in managing to focus on action instead of being frozen by emotional arousal in intercultural situations.

In numerous studies of cross-cultural adaptation self-efficacy is seen as one of the key features in successful adaptation (e.g. Harrison et al., 1996; Hechanova et al., 2003; MacNab & Worthely, 2011; Mak & Tran, 2001; Milsten, 2005). In the review of overseas adjustment studies, Mendenhall &

Oddou (1985) argued that the ability to believe in oneself and one's abilities to deal effectively in a new cultural surrounding is one of the underlying issues behind various skills necessary in adaptation. Black et al. (1991) introduced the term self-efficacy, borrowed from Bandura (1977), and claimed that "individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to persist in exhibiting new behaviors that are being learned, even when those efforts are not successful, longer than do individuals with less self-efficacy" (Black et al., 1991, 307). The authors concluded that the more one exhibits new behaviours in a new situation, the more chances one has of receiving feedback, whether it be positive or negative. This in turn facilitates an understanding of what is expected of oneself, and leads to better adjustment. Self-efficacy is therefore crucially related to the degree of intercultural relations (relational skills) and an understanding of the behaviour of others in a new cultural environment (perceptual skills), which are seen as important cornerstones of successful adaptation in most studies. Harrison et al. (1996) have accentuated the pivotal role of self-efficacy in cross-cultural adjustment for these same reasons.

Cultural intelligence and self-efficacy. Cultural intelligence refers to individual capacities that enable a person to interact effectively with others from different cultural backgrounds and in different cultural contexts (Brislin, Wothley & MacNab, 2006). The cultural intelligence (CQ) theory consists of three components: cognitive, motivation and behaviour. The cognitive component refers to awareness, self-awareness and knowledge (Earley & Peterson, 2004). This component includes the basic knowledge and awareness of different cultures from one's own and how this influences one's perspective and thinking (MacNab & Worthley, 2011). The motivation component refers to perseverance and appropriate goal setting related to cultural interaction (Earley & Peterson, 2004). Macnab & Worthley (2011) explain this as not giving up too soon in relation to the increased challenges and stress that occur in inter-cultural activity. The behaviour component refers to the ability to consciously adapt behaviours suitable to the cultural environment (MacNab & Worthely, 2011). The authors showed that general¹³ self-efficacy is crucial in predicting the successful development of cultural intelligence capacities in all three components.

Anxiety/uncertainty management theory (AUM). Gudykunst and his colleagues' (Gudykunst, 1993, 1995; Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001) anxiety/uncertainty management theory posits that the management of anxiety and uncertainty directly influences the effectiveness of communication. Gudykunst & Nishida (2001) have stated: "Individuals can communicate effectively to the extent that they are able to manage their anxiety and accurately predict and explain other's attitudes, feelings, and behaviors" (p. 55). They argue that other variables, like identity, expectations,

¹³ MacNab & Worthley (2011) distinguish general self-efficacy from task-specific self-efficacy, explaining that general self-efficacy cuts across situations whereas task-specific self-efficacy has an impact on perceived self-efficacy when performing specific tasks.

ability to process information complexly and empathy are superficial causes of effective communication, and that the effects of these variables on communication are mediated through anxiety and uncertainty. Uncertainty is a cognitive phenomenon, and predictive uncertainty is the uncertainty one has about predicting other's attitudes, feelings, beliefs, values, and behaviours. Attributional confidence is the inverse of predictive uncertainty (Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001). Anxiety is the affective or emotional equivalent of uncertainty. Gudykunst (1993) has argued that there are minimum and maximum thresholds for uncertainty and anxiety. When an individual's anxiety and uncertainty are within these thresholds, one can communicate effectively. Gudykunst and Nishida (2001) write that when anxiety is within the thresholds, "we have a high level of confidence in our abilities to predict other's behaviors" (p. 58). This definition has a striking resemblance to Bandura's self-efficacy, where "people guide their lives by their beliefs of personal efficacy" (1997, 3). Gudykunst and Nishida (2001, 62) also showed about anxiety that "anxiety negatively predicts *perceived* effectiveness of communication across relationships and across cultures" (*italics added*). Emotional arousal in the development of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) could be seen as a counterpart to anxiety in AUM communication theory. Gudykunst and Nishida (2001) have argued that when anxiety is above the maximum threshold, one gets so uneasy that one no longer wishes to communicate with others. In Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy and behavioural change: "People rely partly on their state of physiological arousal in judging their anxiety and vulnerability to stress. Because high arousal usually debilitates performance, individuals are more likely to expect success when they are not beset by aversive arousal than if they are tense and viscerally agitated" (p. 198). So both theories entail the claim that anxiety/emotional arousal can inhibit one from completing a task at hand, and that confidence in one's abilities is likely to lead to more effortful behaviour, even when there are setbacks along the way.

All in all, the concept of self-efficacy appears to be either directly or indirectly present in several theories of cross-cultural adaptation. Milsten (2005) connected self-efficacy, for instance, to the culture shock, intercultural sensitivity and intercultural transformation theory, indicating the similarities of the learning and growth in cross-cultural adjustment to the development of self-efficacy by Bandura (1997). She concluded: "A sojourner who judges her sojourn to be a success, whether it was objectively or not, would therefore most likely experience a rise in self-efficacy" (Milsten, 2005, 224). She did find in her study that 95.5% of the sojourners studied retrospectively reported a perceived increase in self-efficacy.

2.4.4 BICULTURALISM, INTEGRATIVE COMPLEXITY AND CULTURAL FRAME SHIFTING

In the research domain of identity in cross-cultural encounters there are some recent new approaches that are worth considering concerning adaptation. I will discuss briefly the concepts of biculturalism, integrative complexity and cultural frame shifting. They are in most studies dealt with Berry's acculturation model (1997).

Tadmor and Tetlock (2006) defined coping with social and cultural conflict situations by internalizing the values of both groups (that of origin and of the new environment) as becoming bicultural (called integrated in Berry's model). They proposed a model that explains 1) the factors affecting the individuals' choice and achievement of different acculturation strategies; and 2) "the differential effects that second culture exposure can have on the integrative complexity of sociocognitive functioning" (p. 174). Integrative complexity in a cross-cultural environment is defined as the ability and willingness to accept different cultural perspectives on how to live and how this motivates one to develop integrative schemas that can change according to the situation and/or blend them together. Tadmor and Tetlock (2006) proposed that bicultural individuals become more integratively complex than assimilating or separating individuals, since they have internalized the contradictory aspects of both old and new cultural perspectives. The authors claimed that "difference between two cultures need to be sufficiently large for people to experience conflict, but not overwhelmingly large" (Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006, 185). This acculturation complexity model (ACM) focuses on the *process* of acculturation.

Hong and colleagues (2000) presented a dynamic constructivist approach to understand culture and transcultural experiences. The concept of *cultural frame shifting* in bicultural individuals is at the core of this approach. Cultural frame shifting (CFS) denotes how bicultural individuals "switch between cultural lenses" depending on the situation (Hong et al., 2000, 709). Hong et al. (2000) argued that individuals can acquire different cultural meaning systems, even contradictory ones, because at any given time only one is activated. Bicultural identity integration (BII) describes variations to what degree bicultural individuals perceive their ethnic and national identities as integrated or oppositional (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002). Chen and colleagues (2008) studied the bicultural identity, bilingualism and psychological adjustment of immigrants, sojourners and majority individuals who came into contact with a second cultural group. The results indicated that for short-term sojourners language ability was a significant predictor of adaptation whereas cultural identification (to the host culture) was not; for immigrants and to some extent to majority-culture individuals bicultural identity identification was linked to better psychological adjustment. The immigrants in this study were mainland Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong, sojourners were Filipino

domestic workers in Hong Kong, and the third group were students in Hong Kong and Beijing. Even though the cultural background of these individuals is different from this study of Brussels expatriates, the results are nevertheless of interest to this study. Bicultural identification integration has been found to correlate with openness to experience and low neuroticism (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005), factors which are included in the MPQ as well as most other adaptation theories. Another finding relevant to the current study of Brussels expatriates is the one that Benet-Martinez, Lee & Leu (2006) made in their study comparing the cultural representations of mono- and biculturals. They found out that biculturals had more complex cultural representations of both their ethnic as well as mainstream culture than monoculturals. They concluded: “Our work suggests the possibility that CFS – or the experience of navigating between two cultures and being forced to reason about their differences, similarities, and abstract qualities – more than traditional cultural membership per se may be critical in the development of complex and multidimensional cultural representations” (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006, 401). They suggest that as biculturals acquire more complex cultural representations through the experiences of CFS, the exposure to multiculturalism may increase individuals’ ability to detect, process and organize everyday cultural meanings also in various other occasions during immersion into a multicultural environment. They mention extensive travelling and being married to a person from a different cultural background as examples of such situations (Benet-Martinez et al., 2006).

2.5 ADDITIONAL TOPICS IN INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION

As mentioned before, multicultural personality factors were originally created based on a wide range of topics that have been the main factors in other cross-cultural studies. Including the concept of self-efficacy and its connections to the theories of cross-cultural studies widens the scale further. Since I will study the components of adaptation to a multicultural environment from qualitative data, some variables not yet discussed should be mentioned. I have chosen to review additional variables most often studied either independently or in relation to other variables in a cross-cultural context.

2.5.1 INDIVIDUAL FACTORS PRIOR TO MOVING

Expectations. According to several studies realistic expectations, i.e. those matching actual experiences, facilitate adaptation (e.g. Rogers & Ward, 1993). Searle & Ward (1990) also found that expectations about cross-cultural difficulties were related to actual difficulties in the course of adaptation. The

problem with most studies done on expectations is that they rely on retrospective ratings of expectations, so the results may have been influenced by the actual experiences. Masgoret (2005) found remarkable correlation between positive expectations and the level of adaptation in a longitudinal study. Masgoret & Ward (2006) note that “positive attitudes and expectations about a new language and culture can have a favorable influence on sojourners and immigrants” (p. 68). Black et al. (1991), in their comprehensive model of intercultural adjustment, argued that previous experiences together with intercultural training before departure lead to more accurate expectations, which in turn facilitates intercultural adjustment.

Previous experience and cross-cultural training. Previous experiences abroad have been shown to help the cross-cultural adaptation, especially socio-cultural adaptation (e.g. Klinenberg & Hull, 1979; Masgoret, 2005; Pruitt, 1978). Previous cross-cultural experiences provide an individual with information about adjustment, which can help form more accurate expectations about future cross-cultural transitions (Church, 1982; Black et al., 1991). This is also in line with studies showing the positive effect of cross-cultural training on adaptation and sojourner satisfaction (e.g. Brislin & Joshida, 1994; Ward & al., 2001; Bhawuk et al., 2006). Cross-cultural training provides individuals with useful information about moving and living in a new society and thus reduces uncertainty associated with cross-cultural transfer (Black et al., 1991).

2.5.2 FACTORS DURING THE ASSIGNMENT OR SOJOURN

The family's and spouse's ability to adjust to new cultural environment have been found to have a substantial influence on employees' adjustment (e.g. review in Black et al. 1991; Hechanova et al., 2003). Arthur and Bennett (1995) found five factors that were the most important in order to succeed in international assignment, and of these the family situation was found to be the most important. Ali et al., (2003) found that family cohesion and family adaptability had a significant impact on the employee's adaptation.

Social support is regarded as an important factor affecting especially psychological adaptation (e.g. Searle & Ward, 1990, Ward & al., 2001). Social support has been seen as best helping adaptation when received from both co-nationals and host nationals (e.g. Berry, Kim, Minde & Mok, 1987), but some studies have also emphasized the significance of social support in family or marital relation (Black et al., 1991; Hechanova et al., 2003). Social support from co-nationals has been associated with lower stress in the acculturation process (Ward & Kennedy, 1993a). Social support from co-nationals can help an individual cope in a new environment, share information and give emotional support (Church, 1982; Ward & al., 2001). However, if interaction with other than co-nationals is minimal, these 'enclaves' (Church, 1982, 551)

or 'expatriate bubbles' (Ward & al., 2001, 86) can inhibit culture learning and adaptation in the long run. This proposition has been challenged though by Copeland and Norell (2002). In their study the adjustment of expatriate spouses who spent more of their time with their own nationality members did not differ from the adjustment of those who spent more time with host or other country nationals (Copeland & Norell, 2002).

The cultural distance between the group of origin and that of settlement is regarded as one of the key background features affecting acculturation and adaptation. Cultural distance refers to how similar or different the two groups are on cultural dimensions. Cultural dimensions have been defined in various ways, but often referring to language, religion, and values, and sometimes also to climate and geographical distance or cultural and/or ethnic similarity between the two groups (Babiker, Cox & Miller, 1980; Furnham & Bochner, 1982). Most studies have found that a larger cultural distance leads to more sociocultural adjustment problems (Church, 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Searle & Ward, 1990). However, Selmer and colleagues (Selmer, 2007; Selmer & Luring, 2009; see also O'Grady & Lane, 1996) have recently argued that cultural similarity can be as difficult in terms of adaptation as cultural difference. Selmer and Luring (2009) showed that in moving to a culture that resembles one's own culture, an individual easily disregards some cultural differences that actually exist. The failure to identify minor but distinct cultural differences in cultural contexts can lead to misinterpretation of the host culture or feelings of one's own inability to cope. In general, the impact of cultural distance on adaptation has been explained in several different ways. Torbiorn (1982) suggested that expatriates usually adapt better to industrialized and economically developed societies. Ward & Kennedy (1999) also pondered the factors connected to cultural distance. They discovered it was easier for Singaporeans to adapt to America than vice versa and explained it by referring to Singapore's multicultural environment. Singaporeans were seen to be better equipped with cultural knowledge and intercultural skills due to their multicultural environment of origin. The authors also noted that cross-cultural transitions are usually easier for those moving with greater financial assets and social status (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Church (1982) has emphasized alike that both the nationality and status of a sojourner have an impact on adjustment.

Cross-cultural variations in *values* have been associated with many differences in rules and conventions, and through this have an impact on intercultural interactions. Major distinctions have been made between individualistic and collectivistic cultures and power distance (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). In studies of sociocultural adaptation, value differences have been studied in particular between differing cultural groups, mostly using Hofstede's (1980,2001) and Schwartz's (1994) cultural values theories. In two separate studies (Kurman & Ronen-Eilon, 2004 and Ward & Searle, 1991) it was noticed that the values of the host culture need not be accepted in order to

adapt socioculturally, but the knowledge and awareness of cross-cultural differences in values have a significant impact on adaptation outcomes. In the following chapters *individual* values will be discussed in detail, as well as their connections to cross-cultural research.

3 INDIVIDUAL VALUES AND INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION

3.1 INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURAL VALUES

The study of values in cross-cultural research has more than doubled over the last three decades (Knafo, Roccas & Sagiv, 2011). At the national level variations in social systems reflect on values, whereas on the individual level values are formulated more due to individual socialization histories (Smith, Bond & Kağıtçıbaşı, 2006, 43). For Schwartz (2011a), basic individual values are an aspect of the personality system of individuals, whereas cultural values are an aspect of the cultural system of societies. The importance of basic individual values reflects the dynamics of individual learning and adjustment to the environment and they can change accordingly. Cultural values reflect the historical experiences and social structural, demographic and ecological characteristics of societies and can change as well, but the cultural change is regarded as quite slow (e.g. Hofstede, 2001; Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Schwartz, 2011b). In this study the values and their connection to adaptation are studied using Schwartz's (1992) theory of individual values. After a brief description of Schwartz's theory, issues studied in individual value research that may prove useful in this study will be discussed. In interpreting the connections of adaptation to a multicultural environment and values, at least the connections of values to behaviour and personality, as well as value change are noteworthy topics.

3.2 SCHWARTZ'S THEORY OF INDIVIDUAL VALUES

Reviewing the many definitions of values in the literature, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) found five common features: values (1) are concepts of beliefs, (2) are about desirable end states of behaviours, (3) transcend specific situations, (4) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (5) are ordered by relative importance (Allport, 1961; Levy & Guttman, 1974; Maslow, 1959; Morris, 1956; Rokeach, 1973). These five formal features which define all values do not, however, identify the crucial contents that distinguish one value from another. Distinguishing feature is the motivational content of the value (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994). "Values are cognitive representations of the important human goals or motivations about which people must communicate in order to coordinate their behavior. The content that distinguishes one value most significantly from another is the type of motivation or goal that it represents" (Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994, 164). Several theorists who have studied values (e.g. Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973;

Schwartz, 1992) have defined values as desirable, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives. Values are regarded as the criteria people use to select and justify their actions and evaluate people (including oneself) and events.

Based on Kluckhohn's (1951) and in particular on Rokeach's (1973) work on values, Schwartz (1992) has developed a theory of basic individual values that defines ten broad, cross-culturally recognized values based on the particular motivational goal that underlies each value (see Table 1).

Table 1 *Definitions of motivational types of values in terms of their goals and the single values used to represent them (Schwartz, 1992)*

Value	Definition
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources (social power, authority, wealth).
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards (successful, capable, ambitious, influential).
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself (pleasure, enjoying life, self-indulgent).
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life (daring, varied life, an exciting life).
Self-direction	Independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring (creativity, freedom, independent, curious, choosing own goals).
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and of nature (broadminded, wisdom, social justice, equality, a world at peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature, protecting the environment).
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact (helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible).
Tradition	Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self (humble, accepting my portion in life, devout, respect for tradition, moderate).
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms (politeness, obedient, self-discipline, honouring parents and elders).
Security	Safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships, and of self (family security, national security, social order, clean, reciprocation of favours).

In Schwartz's value theory the ten value types are organized on two basic, bipolar dimensions, and form a circle continuum (Figure 1). Each pole constitutes a *higher-order value type* that combines two or more of the ten types. One dimension opposes *openness to change* (self-direction and stimulation) to *conservation* (conformity, tradition and security). Openness to

change reflects emphases on one's own independent thought and action and favouring change (Schwartz, 1996). It describes values that motivate people to follow their own intellectual and emotional interests in unpredictable and uncertain directions (Schwartz, 1992). Conservation, on the other hand, describes favouring submissive self-restriction, preservation of traditional practices, and protecting stability (Schwartz, 1996). The second higher-order value type opposes *self-transcendence* (universalism and benevolence) to *self-enhancement* (achievement and power). Hedonism is related to both openness to change and to self-enhancement. Self-enhancement describes values that motivate people to enhance their own personal interests, even at the expense of others (Schwartz, 1992). Self-transcendence reflects the values that motivate people to transcend selfish concerns and pursue the welfare of others, close and distant, and of nature (Schwartz, 1992). Self-transcendence values contain the idea of accepting others as equals, as opposed to the self-enhancement pretension to dominance over others (Schwartz, 1996). Values are alike divided into those that serve collective interests (benevolence, tradition, conformity), those that serve individual interests (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction), and those that serve mixed interests (universalism, security) (Schwartz, 1992). Schwartz formed a typology of the different contents of individual values by reasoning that values represent, in the form of conscious goals, three universal requirements of human existence to which all individuals and societies must be responsive: the needs of individuals as biological organisms (a source for example of stimulation values), the requisites of coordinated social interaction (benevolence as an example), and the demands of group survival and functioning (e.g. conformity) (e.g. Schwartz 1992, 2011a).

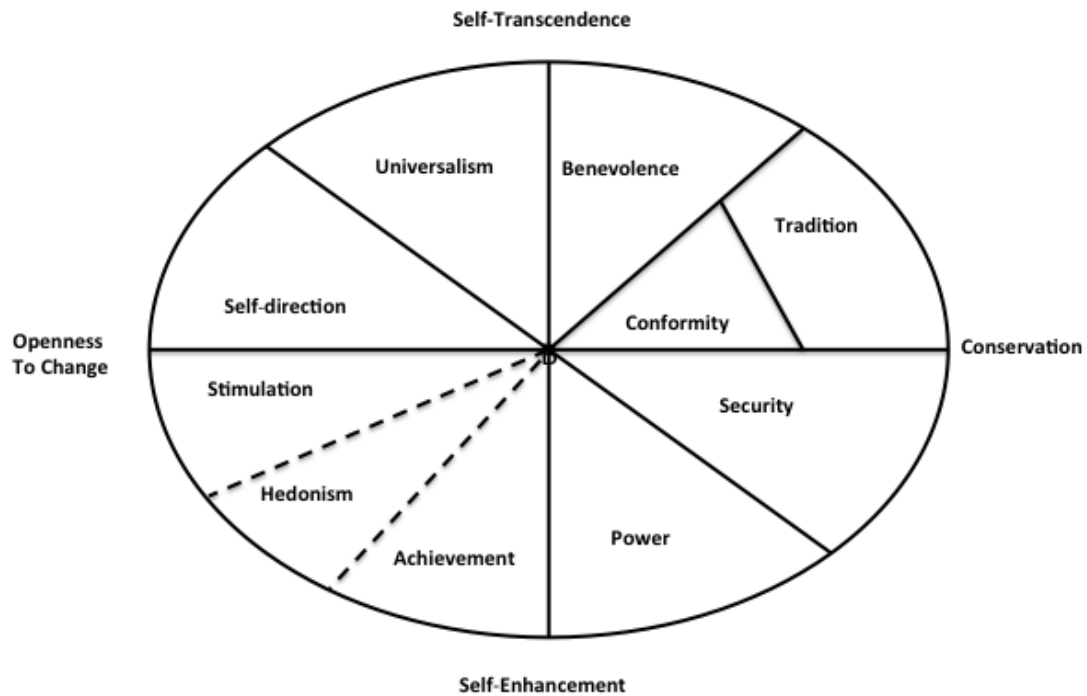


Figure 1 Schwartz's model of motivational types of values (Schwartz, 1992)

The overall structure of values contains the idea that as opposing values have opposed motivational goals (the higher order value types described above), adjacent values are compatible with each other. Adjacent values have shared motivational orientations in the following sequence (Schwartz, 1996):

Power and achievement both emphasize social superiority and esteem.

Achievement and hedonism both express self-centredness.

Stimulation and self-direction both involve intrinsic motivation for mastery and openness to change.

Self-direction and universalism both express reliance upon one's own judgment and comfort with the diversity of existence.

Universalism and benevolence both entail concern for the enhancement of the other and transcendence of selfish interests.

Benevolence and tradition/conformity all promote devotion to one's in-group.

Tradition/conformity and security all emphasize conservation of order and harmony in relation.

Security and power both stress avoiding or overcoming the threat of uncertainties by controlling relationships and resources.

Schwartz (1996, 2005, 2011b) emphasizes the integrated circular structure of values and the usefulness of theorizing about the relation of value priorities to other variables. He explains the theorizing to begin with reasoning of

particular values most and least positively related to the variable in question. Basically, the circular structure of values should then enable to point to a pattern of positive, negative, and zero connections to the remaining values. The following step is to theorize why these connections should be expected. However, there may be deviations from the expected pattern. Schwartz regards these deviations as especially interesting since they show a way to search for special conditions that may weaken or enhance the relation between the variable and values (Schwartz, 2005).

Schwartz and his colleagues (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, Lehmann & Roccas, 1999; Schwartz et al., 2001) have developed three instruments to measure individual differences in value priorities. The first was the Schwartz Value Survey that includes fifty-six or fifty-seven value items (SVS), each item followed by a short explanatory phrase in parentheses. Respondents are asked to rate each value as a guiding principle in their own life on a 9-point scale from -1 to 7. Due to the abstract nature of the SVS, two shorter and slightly different versions were developed, namely a Portrait Value Questionnaire with 40 and 21 items. The PVQ includes short verbal portraits of different people. Each describes a person's goals, aspirations or wishes that point implicitly to the importance of a certain value (Schwartz et al. 2001). For each portrait, the respondent answers how much he/she is like this person on a 6-point scale from 1 to 6. The Schwartz value theory has established predictive validity across samples, outcome variables, languages, and cultures, and has been shown to significantly predict behaviour across a variety of applied settings. Over 250 samples from representative national samples in 67 countries have examined the value relations using the three different methods and proved both the motivationally distinct content and the circular structure to be valid (Schwartz, 2011a). Furthermore, since 2002 the European Social Survey (ESS) uses a 21-item PVQ. Over 150,000 respondents from representative samples in 32 countries have completed the survey (Schwartz, 2011a).

3.2.1 WORK AS A VALUE

Helkama (1999) has argued that the Schwartz's model of individual values lacks work-oriented values such as orderly, systematic, punctual, and hard-working. Ros, Schwartz, and Surkiss (1999) defined work values as expressions of ten basic values in the work settings, in other words work values are included in ten basic values but do not form an independent value of their own. According to Ros et al. (1999), basic higher order value types imply four types of work values: extrinsic ones express conservation values; intrinsic work values express openness to change values; social or interpersonal work values express self-transcendence values; and prestige values express self-enhancement values. In several value surveys conducted in Finland work has been studied together with Schwartz's basic human values

as an independent value. Helkama and colleagues' (Helkama, 2012a; Myyry & Helkama, 2001; Verkasalo et al., 2005) hypothesis has been that work values are an independent value type, which deviates from Schwartz's value typology because its correlations with ten basic values do not usually follow the sinusoid curve found in Schwartz's value structure. While it forms a psychometrically homogenous value type (e.g. Helkama, 2012a; Verkasalo et al., 2005), it usually correlates most strongly with conformity and achievement values, contrary to Schwartz's notion of a sinusoidal pattern. Myyry and Helkama (2001), however, found a clear sinusoidal pattern for work values, with the highest correlations with achievement and power. Helkama (2012b) claims that work values, which he also refers to as Protestant ethic values, are "a homogenous value but usually not part of the Schwartz's system" and they are supposedly "part of the social representation of Finnish identity" (pp. 35-36).

3.2.2 VALUES AND PERSONALITY

The Big Five personality traits connection to cross-cultural adaptation has already been discussed in the previous chapters. Values and traits of personality have also been discovered to show meaningful associations in several studies (e.g. Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994; Roccas et al., 2002). Roccas et al. (2002) stated three mechanisms by which traits and values are linked: (1) inborn temperaments may give rise to parallel values and traits, (2) individuals may modify their values to fit and justify the traits that characterize them, (3) and value priorities may also induce value-consistent behaviour which is perceived as traits. Roccas et al. (2002) found several remarkable correlations with the Big Five personality traits and values. Openness to experience correlated positively with self-direction, universalism and stimulation values, and negatively with conformity, security and tradition. Agreeableness correlated positively with benevolence, tradition, and to a lesser degree with conformity. Extraversion had a positive correlation with achievement and stimulation values, and conscientiousness with achievement and conformity. The authors concluded that values and traits are conceptually and empirically distinct, but nevertheless related psychological constructs. Traits refer to what people are; values to what people consider important (Roccas et al., 2002). Values are cognitive representations of motivations, and are therefore better predictors of attitudes and behaviours over which people have cognitive control or choice. Personality traits are seen as better predictors of spontaneous, intuitive, and emotionally driven attitudes and behaviors over which individuals have little cognitive control (Roccas et al., 2002).

3.2.3 THE CONNECTION OF VALUES TO BEHAVIOUR

Schwartz claimed in his earlier writings (1996) that values may play only a small role in behaviour except when there is value conflict between opposing values in the situation, but he later changed and broadened his statement as new researches were made on the subject. In 2005 in his article Schwartz explained four processes how values can influence behaviour. The first process is *value activation*, referring to the situations where value-relevant aspects activate values. Schwartz claims that values that are more important to a person are also more likely to be activated (2005). He refers to the study of Verplanken & Holland (2002), where the authors showed that activating values actually caused behaviour in high-priority values. The second process between values and behaviour is *values as a source of motivation*. Actions that enable the attainment of valued goals become more attractive in a situation where a person has a possibility to carry out the action that he values highly. If a person, for instance, values self-direction and achievement and has an opportunity to get a managerial post, this situation enables him to achieve the goals that he values highly. Schwartz (2005) writes: "High-priority values are central to the self-concept. Sensing an opportunity to attain them sets off an automatic, positive, affective response to actions that will serve them. Sensing a threat to value attainment sets off a negative affective response" (p. 78). Values can influence the attractiveness of actions either with conscious thought or even without it. The third linking process Schwartz mentions is *the influence of values on attention, perception, and interpretation in situations*. This means that each person defines the situation in the light of the values that are most important to him or her. So the same situation e.g. facing something new and unknown can be attractive to someone who values stimulation, and threatening to another who values security. The fourth process is *the influence of values on the planning of action*. Referring to Gollwitzer's (1996) writing, Schwartz (2005) argues that the higher the priority one gives to a value, the more likely one is going to plan an action that can lead to its expression in behaviour. Rohan (2000) has also argued that value priorities are guides to "live the best way possible" (pp. 263-264). She writes that a value system can be regarded as providing individuals with a way to decide which requirements or desires are the most and least important to best possible living. She has noted though, that people may not always behave consistently with their value priorities, since personal or environmental constraints may prevent this (Rohan, 2000).

The association of values with behaviour has been studied and demonstrated in numerous studies. These include values correlations to e.g. attitudes on political orientation and religiosity (Schwartz et al. 2001), voting behaviour (Schwartz, 2005), use of alcohol and use of mobile telephones (Schwartz et al., 2001), cooperation, and purchasing environmentally friendly products (Schwartz, 2005).

In general it has been proven that values do motivate behaviour, but normative pressures can influence how value-related behaviour correlates with values (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Schwartz, 2005). Norms for behaviour in relevant groups may pose a pressure to conform with norms even when normative behaviour is opposed to an individual's own values. On the other hand, the less important a value is for the group, the stronger the relation between personal value priority and its connection to value-related behaviour. In 1997 Schwartz & Bardi discovered that life under Communist rule in Eastern Europe had a profound effect on people's values. Lönnqvist, Leikas, Paunonen, Nissinen & Verkasalo (2006) studied conformism values' moderating effects between values, anticipated regret and behaviour. They discovered that those who valued conformism were not so guided by their personal norms as those who did not value conformism. On the other hand, with people who were low on conformism values, personal values related to self-transcendence (universalism, benevolence and low power) corresponded reasonably well to their altruistic behaviour and regret over a bad decision (Lönnqvist et al., 2006).

Bardi and Schwartz (2003) examined the relations of a comprehensive set of values together with a large array of common behaviours that express them in order to find which values relate most strongly to behaviour. Tradition and stimulation values were found to correlate most highly with behaviour, and security, conformity, benevolence, and achievement most weakly. Hedonism, self-direction, universalism, and power showed moderate correlations with value-related behaviour.

Considering values and behaviour, Schwartz (e.g. 1992, 1996, 2005) has highlighted that both attitudes and behaviour are guided not by the priority given to a single value but by *tradeoffs* among competing values that are implicated simultaneously in the behaviour or attitude. Most behaviours have positive implications for some values but negative implications for opposing values. In order to predict behaviour, it is essential to consider the importance of the values the behaviour can harm and those it can promote (Schwartz, 2005). Also, the specific context in which values are expressed or pursued in order to make sense of value-behaviour relations, should not be neglected (Schwartz, 1996).

3.2.4 VALUE CHANGE

In Schwartz's (1992) theory of individual values the main interest is in value *priorities*, the relative importance of different values and their connection to other variables. The life circumstances of an individual are determined by his or her age, gender, education, socialization, and numerous other variables. The differences in these background characteristics affect life circumstances and value priorities. Schwartz (2005) specifies age, gender and education as key

background variables affecting value priorities. However, anything that affects the life circumstances to which one must adapt can influence value priorities.

Already mentioned in earlier chapter, Rohan (2000) has proposed that value priorities can be regarded as guides for living the best way possible. That includes the idea that people's value priorities will change in response to changes in their life or environment. As individuals' experiences and personal attributes (such as skills) affect their views of the best possible living, changes in circumstances and personal attributes also change their value priorities. According to Schwartz: "Individual value priorities are a product of both shared culture and of unique personal experiences" (1999, 25).

Even though value theorists (e.g. Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992) have noted that values can change, the topic of *individual* value change has not been widely studied. Bardi et al. (2009) recently carried out several studies on the structure of value change. They discovered that the greater the extent of life-changing events, the greater the value change. They also found that the effect of life events was larger than the effect of age on value change. Value change was also noted to happen in Schwartz's value structure, so that an increase in the importance of any value was accompanied by slight increases in the importance of compatible values and by decreases in the importance of conflicting values.

Bardi and Goodwin (2011) have presented a model of value change applicable to cross-cultural research in which they regard values as schemas and value change as schema change.¹⁴ The authors suggest that the process of value change is likely to start with environmental cues, leading to value change either through automatic or effortful routes. As an example of an *automatic value change* they mention a situation where an individual moves to a new country and through using a new language on a daily basis adapts to new values of the new culture. Furthermore, environmental cues may also directly invoke thinking about values, which then leads an individual to challenge his or her values and possibly change them. This is called *effortful processing*. Value change is presumed in most cases to be temporary in the beginning but can become permanent in time through repetition of a new schema (e.g. staying longer in a new culture). Bardi & Goodwin (2011) named five facilitators of value change. The first is priming: automatic schema change is likely to occur through repeated priming of an alternative schema. If the same concept is primed repeatedly by a new life situation (e.g. a new culture), permanent change in values can take place. The second facilitator is adaptation: adaptation to new life situations leads to value change both through automatic and effortful routes. The third facilitator is identification: when a person enters a new group (work group, new culture) identifying with this new group may result in value change toward the group's values. The fourth is consistency maintenance: following the guidelines of Rokeach's (1968) intervention on value change, Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory

¹⁴ The authors built the theory based on Janoff-Bulman's (1989) theory of schemas and schema change.

(1957) and self-perception theory by Bem (1967), the authors suggested that consistent change in behaviour can result in value change through observation of one's own behaviour. According to Bardi and Goodwin (2011, 280): "This process of behavior to values can help explain changes in values due to adaptation to new situations. A new life situation requires new behavior (for example, the laws or social-norms of a new country, behavior required by a new life role like becoming a parent, or by a new position at work – e.g., becoming a manager). Therefore, this suggested process may also contribute to the internalization of norms." The fifth facilitator is the direct persuasion attempt, such as media messages, education programmes and, programmes of value-socialization in organizations. As with attitude change, attempts to change values are more likely to succeed for values that are not the most important to a person or alternatively strengthen further the values that are already quite important. (Bardi & Goodwin, 2011.)

3.3 INDIVIDUAL VALUES IN CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES

Individuals have been shown to adapt their value priorities to be compatible with the opportunities and constraints they confront (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997). Cultures and social institutions on the societal level and individual experiences on the individual level both influence an individual's value priorities and provide opportunities to express or attain particular values. One could easily presume that values are therefore an important aspect in cross-cultural adaptation theories. Schwartz's individual values have been studied worldwide, but the research that connects *individual* values and aspects of adaptation (or acculturation) are not that common. I shall briefly review some studies here in order to illustrate how individual values have been connected to cross-cultural studies.

One of the earliest studies concerning individual values in cross-cultural research was done by Gudykunst & al. (1996). Research concerned low-context and high-context communication styles across cultures and whether individual level values and self construals or cultural level individualism-collectivism are better predictors of communication styles. Low-context communication refers to the use of explicit and direct messages, whereas high-context communication involves the use of implicit and indirect messages. Independent self-construal refers to the view that an individual is unique, an independent entity. The interdependent self construal, in contrast, entails the view that the individual is primarily a part of a group. Cultural individualism-collectivism indicates the influence of culture in the socialization process, whether individual or collectivistic tendencies are favoured. The results showed that individual values and self construals were better predictors of low- and high-context communication styles across cultures than the cultural

individualism-collectivism dimension. The authors concluded that cultural individualism-collectivism does influence communication through cultural norms and rules, but self construals and individual values influence individuals' styles of communication across a wider spectrum of situations. (Gudykunst et al., 1996.)

In 1995 Sagiv and Schwartz studied the relations of individuals' value priorities to their readiness for out-group social contact in Israel. Even though the study is not about expatriates or immigrants, the results are of interest to the study of cross-cultural adaptation. The groups studied were Israeli Jewish teachers (the dominant group) and Israeli Arabs (the minority group). The authors found that Jewish teachers' readiness for out-group social contact correlated positively with universalism and self-direction values and negatively with emphasizing tradition, security and conformity values. Universalism values denote understanding, accepting and showing concern for the welfare of all human beings, even those whose ways of life differ from one's own, hence the correlation between universalism and the readiness for out-group contact. Furthermore, readiness for out-group contact provides exposure to new and different ways of life and opportunities to learn about and explore them, which is coherent with self-direction values. The negative correlations between tradition, security and conformity values and out-group social contact were explicated as well. Social contact with out-group members places individuals in situations where familiar norms do not apply, making it difficult to maintain smooth relations and to avoid violating expectations, therefore opposing conformity values. The negative correlations for tradition and security were explained so that out-group contact places one in a situation where one is exposed to divergent traditions and customs, and out-group members may be seen as a threat to the prevailing social order. (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995.)

Cultural differences in emotional display rules have been studied before on cultural level values (e.g. Matsumoto, Takeuchi, Andayani, Koutznetsova & Krupp, 1998; Matsumoto, Kasri & Kookan, 1999). Koopmann-Holm & Matsumoto (2011) claimed that cultural differences in *individual-level values* exist, are related to display rules within cultures, and explain between-cultural differences in display rules. They were able to show that Germans, who valued openness to change more than Americans, also endorsed more expressions of anger and sadness, and that these expressions were related to the values in question. Americans were found to value more conservation and self-enhancement and endorsed more expressions of contempt and disgust than Germans, disgust being connected to self-enhancement. The authors emphasized the fact that in cross-cultural studies differences are usually studied between West and East, neglecting the fact that even *within* Western cultures there may be substantial differences (Koopmann-Holm & Matsumoto, 2011).

Roccas, Horenczyk and Schwartz (2000) studied immigrants' well-being and values and immigrants' own attitudes toward acculturation as well as

perceived acculturation expectations of the host society. They discovered that among those immigrants who valued conformity highly, the larger the discrepancy between their own acculturation attitudes and those attitudes perceived from the host society, the lower their life-satisfaction. On the other hand, among immigrants who attributed low importance to conformity, acculturation discrepancies did not relate to well-being (Roccas et al., 2000).

3.3.1 ADAPTATION TO MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT AND VALUES

Bobowik et al. (2011) inquired into students' multicultural personality traits and their connections to Schwartz's (1992) individual values. Since the five factors actually cover the multicultural effectiveness in a broader meaning than just personality traits, their correlations with individual values, as cognitive representations of motives in the form of goals, were expected. The most significant finding was that the MPQ factor flexibility correlated with stimulation value. Bobowik et al. (2011) also discovered that both universalism and self-direction correlated with open-mindedness. The authors explained the connection of self-direction to open-mindedness with the idea of the appreciation of independence in action and thought. In the same study the negative correlation between tradition and open-mindedness was likewise found (Bobowik et al. 2011). Achievement was related to low emotional stability. The authors speculated that more anxious people experience fear of failure more often, and this leads to a higher appreciation of achievement and the need to demonstrate one's own competence (Bobowik et al., 2011).

3.3.2 EMIGRATION AND VALUES

Tartakovsky and Schwartz (2001) proposed a new theoretical typology of motivations to emigrate deriving from a theory of basic human values. As values are cognitive representations of people's motivations, motivations to emigrate can be seen to reflect higher-order values. The authors write that in general people strive to fulfil their goals and express their values in their native country. However, for some this may be more difficult than for others, and they decide to emigrate in order to better pursue their goals in life, and to better express or protect their values. In their theory Tartakovsky and Schwartz (2001) proposed and presented three¹⁵ different types of motivations to emigrate: preservation, self-development and materialistic motivation. Each

¹⁵ Tartakovsky and Schwartz (2001) also discussed the fourth motivation, idealism. This motivation refers to the motivation to emigrate in order to build a better society for one's community, linking the idealism motivation to self-transcendence. However, they found almost no evidence of this motivation in their study of Russian immigrants in Israel, and therefore did not include this motivation in their study. The authors proposed that the idealism motivation is limited to oppressed groups who believe they can build a new society in a new land.

motivation correlates positively with the higher-order value from which it is derived and negatively with the conceptually opposite value in the value circle. (1) The preservation motivation to emigrate derives from the conservation value and is opposed to openness. Preservation refers to physical, social, and psychological security for the self and one's family as motivators to emigrate. The preservation motivation comes into play when people feel they cannot attain the goals of conservation values (security, tradition and conformity) in their own country. (2) The self-development motivation to emigrate derives from the higher-order value of openness to change and refers to personal growth and freedom to choose new, different and challenging ways of living. The self-development motivation correlates negatively with valuing conservation. (3) The materialistic motivation to emigrate refers to financial well-being and wealth. It expresses the higher-order value of self-enhancement and correlates negatively with self-transcendence value. It emphasizes the pursuit of self-interest through attaining socially approved status, achievement and control over resources. According to the authors, more than one of the motivations at the same time may induce an individual to emigrate. For example, an individual may emigrate both for personal growth (self-development motivation) and for materialistic reasons (materialistic motivation). (Tartakowsky & Schwartz, 2001.)

In migration studies, economic reasons have often been regarded as an important motivation to emigrate (e.g. De Vos, 1983). People usually emigrate from less to more economically advanced countries. Another reason commonly mentioned has been already existing networks of relatives and friends in industrial societies that serve as pull factors for secondary immigrants, following the path of their countrymen and relatives who left before them (e.g. Martin, 1993). Nowadays, however, there is a vast number of people who do not move from less developed countries and do not follow their families and countrymen. Boneva & Frieze (2001) studied Eastern European people and were able to show that those who wanted to resettle in another country were more work-oriented and were higher on achievement and power motivation, but lower on affiliation motivation and family centrality, than those who did not want to leave their country of origin. Several other studies have also shown that immigrants often have high motivation for achievement (e.g. Boneva et al., 1998; DeVos, 1983; Tidrick, 1971). However, Boneva & Frieze (2001) point out that other factors probably affect whether high motivation to achievement enhances the probability to migrate. If, for example, conditions in one's own country limit the possibilities to achieve and face challenges, "achievers" are more likely to emigrate in order to seek better opportunities. The authors highlighted the fact that instead of only considering the economic situation, personality factors may be the triggering factors to migrate. Even when migrating from economically less advanced countries, migrating people are often in fact people with a higher income than the ones who stay in their country of origin (e.g. Tidrick, 1971). Boneva & Frieze (2001) argued that

personality factors, other psychological factors, environmental factors both in the country of origin as well as the receiving country together with opportunities in both countries all produce actual migratory behaviour. Knafo and Schwartz (2001) have also pointed out the importance of considering the uniqueness of every immigrant group, the country of origin and the destination as well as the historic situation in studies of immigration and values.

3.4 CULTURAL VALUES, SHARED BY INDIVIDUALS?

In the present study cultural values are mainly informative; they will be brought up later in the description of the society of origin (Finland) and that of settlement (Belgium). A few points concerning cultural values are nevertheless worth mentioning.

For the theoreticians of national/cultural level values there are several definitions of the nature of culture-level values. The relation of cultural-level values to individual-level values is also under constant discussion. Hofstede (1980, 2001) has argued that cultural and individual level values differ from each other. However, for both Hofstede (2001) and Inglehart and Baker (2000) cultural values are values that members of the society share. Hofstede (1980) argues that cultural dimensions of values should apply to a statistical majority of the population and discriminate between cultures. Hofstede (2001, 9) treats culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another”. At the core of a culture are values. Hofstede (2001) has defined five dimensions of cultural values: (1) *Power distance* is the extent to which the less powerful members of the organizations and institutions (including the family) accept that power is distributed unequally; (2) *Uncertainty avoidance* is the dimension to what extent the society programmes its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. The basic idea is the degree to which a society tries to control the uncontrollable; (3) *Individualism-collectivism* is the dimension to what degree individuals are supposed to act as individuals versus acting as members of the group, e.g. family; (4) *Masculinity-femininity* dimension refers to the distribution of emotional roles between genders in a society. Masculine societies are seen as “tough” and feminine societies as “tender”, and; (5) *Long-term versus short-term* dimension is the extent to which a society or culture programmes its members to accept delayed gratification of their material, social, and emotional needs.

Schwartz (2011a, 2011b) disagrees with Hofstede concerning the consensus of cultural values. For Schwartz (2011b), cultural values are “normative value emphases that underlie and justify the functioning of societal institutions. Individual values, beliefs, practices, symbols, and norms are manifestations of

the underlying culture, but they themselves are not the culture. Culture itself is a hypothetical, latent variable measurable only through manifestations. The normative emphases of a culture shape the content and distribution of individual values, beliefs, actions, and so forth, through the expectations, opportunities, and constraints to which people are exposed” (p. 314). Schwartz (2011b) argues that there is no substantial sharing of cultural values within society. Fischer and Schwartz (2011) have studied differences in cultural values and argue that value importance ratings vary much more between individuals than between countries. However, conformity values showed considerably high levels of within-country agreement, suggesting they might be good candidates for measuring culture as shared meaning systems.

4 EMPATHY AND INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION

4.1 DAVIS'S MODEL OF EMPATHY

When reviewing the theories of adaptation in cross-cultural studies, empathy is present in practically all studies. Terms like cultural empathy and intuition sensitivity are brought up and explained. I have chosen to take the theory of empathy formed by Davis (1983, 1994) to be part of this study, in order to further explain the different aspects of empathy in the adaptation process, and to study the role of empathy in the expatriate sample.

Empathy has been defined by some theorists as a cognitive phenomenon (e.g. Hogan, 1969), while others have stressed its emotional part (e.g. Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972). Hogan (1969) defined empathy as “the intellectual or imaginative apprehension of other’s condition or state of mind” (p. 307), whereas Mehrabian and Epstein (1972) studied emotional empathy linked to aggression and helping behaviour. Hoffman’s (1981) developmental theory of empathy encompasses cognitive role-taking, feelings of sympathy for the other as well as personal feelings of distress. Davis (1994) has defined empathy broadly, taking into account cognitive, affective, and also behavioural components. According to Davis (1994, 12), empathy is defined as a set of constructs that includes the *processes* taking place within the observer and the affective and non-affective *outcomes* that result from those processes. Based on this definition Davis has formulated the organizational model of empathy where the term “empathy” describes a wider range of phenomena than in other definitions.

Davis’s (1994) organizational model of empathy is based on an inclusive definition of empathy, where empathy is broadly defined as a set of constructs having to do with the responses of one individual to the experiences of another. According to Davis, the organizational model explains a typical empathy ‘episode’ as consisting of an observer being exposed in some way to a target, after which some response on the part of the observer, cognitive, affective, and/or behavioural, occurs. Four related constructs can be identified within this prototypical episode: *antecedents* referring to the characteristics of the observer, target, or situation; *processes* referring to the particular mechanism by which empathic outcomes are produced; *intrapersonal outcomes*, which refer to cognitive and affective responses produced in the observer, target, or situation; and *interpersonal outcomes*, which refer to behavioural responses directed toward the target (Davis, 1994, 12). Deduced from the model Davis has named four separate but related aspects of empathy, each tapping a certain facet of empathy: perspective taking, empathic concern, personal distress and fantasy (1983; 1994). The multidimensional empathy

measurement instrument called the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) was created to measure these aspects (Davis, 1983; 1994). Questionnaire contains four seven-item subscales, each tapping a separate aspect of empathy. The four aspects of empathy (Davis, 1983, 1994) are as follows:

1) The perspective taking (PT) scale assesses the tendency to spontaneously adopt the psychological point of view of others in everyday life (e.g. “I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.”). PT has been found to be consistently related to interpersonal functioning (Davis, 1983). High perspective takers reported less social dysfunction and more social competence. A modest relationship with self-esteem has also been found. A greater PT tendency has been associated with less self-reported nervousness, anxiety and insecurity. PT can be said to be the “cognitive” part of empathy.

2) The empathic concern (EC) scale assesses “other-oriented” feelings of sympathy and compassion for unfortunate others (e.g. “I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.”). The EC scale is strongly associated with a measure of selflessness and concern for others, some shyness and anxiety, and is negatively related to an undesirable interpersonal style characterized by boastfulness and egoism (Davis, 1983). EC taps the affective outcomes of empathy.

3) The personal distress (PD) scale measures the tendency to experience distress and discomfort in tense interpersonal settings or in stressful situations (e.g. “In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease.”). High PD has been found to be associated with social dysfunction and low social competence. Those high on the PD scale tend to report being shyer, more socially anxious and less extraverted. The high PD scale was also found to be associated with low self-esteem and chronic fearfulness, uncertainty and vulnerability, as well as concern for the self as the object of others’ evaluations (Davis, 1983).

4) The Fantasy (FS) scale taps respondents’ tendencies to transpose themselves imaginatively into fictional situations (e.g. “When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.”). Fantasy scale scores have been essentially unrelated to measures of social functioning, with one exception: with men high fantasy scores were associated with more shyness, loneliness and anxiety in social settings. High fantasizers are slightly more susceptible to emotional responses. Compared to empathic concern, the FS scale also bears a stronger relationship with measures of verbal intelligence and a much lower one with other-oriented sensitivity (Davis, 1983, 1994).

4.2 DAVIS'S MODEL OF EMPATHY AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Davis has shown that perspective taking, empathic concern and personal distress have reliable effects on behaviour concerning specific relationships (1994, 178). The following examples show the relevance of these aspects in various interpersonal settings, and can be of interest to interpersonal relations across cultures as well.

In studies about good communication and empathy high EC scores have been consistently associated with fluent and successful communication in romantic relationships and to some extent in friendship relationships (Davis & Oathout, 1992; Franzoi, Davis & Young, 1985). High EC scores are especially associated with warmer and more supportive behaviour (Davis, 1994, 183-192).

High PT scores have been found to be associated with better negotiation skills and a tactful and considerate interpersonal style that can also help in conflict management (Neale & Bazerman, 1983; Rusbult, Verette, Whitney, Slovik & Lipkus, 1991). In general, individuals high on the perspective taking scale possess an interpersonal style that helps to form smoother relationships due to their ability to see things from other's perspectives (Davis, 1994, 183-195). PT is associated with more tolerance towards others and a greater ability to see other's motives. Perspective taking and empathic concern have both been found to be associated with self-reported traits and behaviour reflecting a tactful, tolerant, and even-tempered approach to social relationships (Davis, 1994, 195). Perspective taking and empathic concern have also been both associated with holding more tolerant, less punitive attitudes towards members of out-groups (Sheehan, Lennon & McDevitt, 1989).

As perspective taking and empathic concern help in forming smooth relationships, personal distress has been connected to higher social dysfunction and lower social competence (Davis, 1983). Davis has explained that this is due to the fact that individuals high on the personal distress scale are often shy and more anxious in social situations, which inhibits smooth establishment of social relationships. PD has been found to be associated with emotionality characterized by fearfulness, uncertainty and vulnerability (Davis, 1983).

4.3 ASPECTS OF EMPATHY IN CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION THEORIES

In cross-cultural adaptation theories empathy is usually included in theories either as a factor by itself or as a part of another factor, describing emotional balance or an ability to take the perspective of others, or the ability to sympathize with other

cultures. These aspects of empathy in cross-cultural studies resemble different aspects of Davis's model of empathy. Two of these aspects, emotional balance and perspective taking are included in all the pioneering theories of cross-cultural adaptation. To illustrate varying forms of these parts of empathy in the adaptation studies I shall review three examples and their similarities with Davis's (1994) empathy aspects. The examples are various measurement tools or theories of cross-cultural adaptation, each focusing on different aspects of adaptation.

In 1962 Gardner presented the model of the universal communicator. The model deals with communication competence in intercultural settings. Gardner (1962) included into his model both "an unusual degree of integration/stability", and "a marked telepathic or intuition sensitivity" (p. 248). The former refers directly to emotional balance, the reverse counterpart of Davis's (1994) personal distress. The latter Gardner himself referred to as an "empathic capacity" or the "ability to take the role of others" (Gardner, 1962, 248-249), which is similar to perspective taking in Davis's (1994) model.

Hammer et al.'s (2003) intercultural development inventory (IDI) was developed to measure intercultural sensitivity, also explained as orientations toward cultural differences (Hammer et al., 2003). Two aspects of Davis's (1994) empathy model are also present in this theory, even though the interest of the study is different. The intercultural anxiety scale in the IDI (Hammer et al., 2003) was described to focus on the degree of anxiety individuals experience when interacting with people from other cultures than their own, resembling Davis's (1994) personal distress. The state of adaptation in the model "is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture" (Hammer et al., 2003, 425). This does have a resemblance to perspective taking in Davis's (1994) empathy model.

The third example is Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2000, 2001) multicultural personality questionnaire, which has been developed to measure intercultural effectiveness and adaptability. In the MPQ the emotional stability factor is an accurate counterpart to the inverse of Davis's (1994) personal distress. The cultural empathy factor refers to the "ability to empathize with feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of members from different cultural groups" (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 294), resembling the mixture of empathic concern and the perspective taking ability in Davis's (1994) model of empathy.

As can be noticed from the examples above, Davis's model of empathy has aspects that can be useful in studying adaptation in cross-cultural settings. Especially perspective taking and personal distress are counterparts of different factors describing empathy in several cross-cultural adaptation theories. Despite this convergence the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1994) has not been applied to cross-cultural studies.

5 BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE STUDY

Cultural distance and its significance was brought up in the theoretical part (chapter 2.5.2). In addition to definitions of cultural distance, the basic factors of both place of origin and of settlement have been stressed by several cross-cultural researchers (e.g. Berry, 2006; Knafo & Schwartz, 2001; Phinney et al., 2000). These factors include e.g. the political and economic situation as well as demographic factors, and general orientations towards immigration and pluralism in the settlement society. I shall describe the Brussels region as well as Finland, and make some remarks about the similarities and differences.

5.1 BRUSSELS, A MULTICULTURAL CITY

The Brussels-Capital Region is comprised of 19 municipalities and has a surface area of 161.4 km², and 1,048,491 inhabitants (Deboosere et al., 2009).¹⁶ The population density is one of the highest in the world, being in the Brussels capital region 6751.3 inhabitants/km² (355/km² in Belgium in general, the total population being about 11 million inhabitants), (Brussels Institute for Statistics and Analysis, 2011). The population is highly multicultural. Almost one third (28.14%) have a different nationality than Belgian (Deboosere et al., 2009), and a further 20% have changed their original nationality to Belgian nationality (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009). About half of the foreigners come from industrialized countries and another half from third world countries (Favell & Martiniello, 2000). The growth of the immigration population in Brussels was first due to the arrival of low-skilled foreign workers in the 1950s and 1960s, predominantly from Italy, Spain, and Greece, and later from Morocco, Turkey, Tunisia and Algeria. In addition are ex-Zairians (Congo), who came originally as part of Belgian post-colonial arrangements (Favell & Martiniello, 2000). The more recent foreign population is due to highly-educated foreigners working for international organizations, e.g. the European Community and NATO, as well as international coalitions (Jacobs et al., 1999). Furthermore, since the 1990s, a new wave of migrants has started to arrive, coming from all over the world, including illegal migrants who come either temporarily or permanently and who often seek an income through informal activities (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009), as well as asylum seekers. The number of different nationalities is vast, with at least 45 different

¹⁶ The city region of Brussels as a social-geographic entity is often regarded as including the surrounding suburban areas as well, since a large proportion of the population working in Brussels live there. These areas are also favoured by the foreigners, and statistically it is estimated, that the composition of the population is approximately the same as in the Brussels-Capital Region, with an estimated 1.7 million inhabitants altogether. However, the official statistics are not available for this region (Jacobs, Nys, Réa & Swyngedouw, 1999).

nationalities of at least 1,000 inhabitants (Deboosere et al., 2009) and with an estimated 170 nationalities altogether residing in the Brussels area (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009). All in all, the foreign population in Brussels is from all over the world and is comprised of earlier lower-skilled workers and their (grand)children, ex-Zairians, Euro officials, multinational expatriates, refugees and illegal immigrants, forming a foreign population of which some are wealthy and others extremely poor. It has been estimated that 10 to 15% of the population in the Brussels area consists of foreigners and their families who work for European and international institutions, international firms or instances linked to these international affairs (Corijn, Vandermotten, Declory & Swyngedouw, 2009; Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009). On top of that there is a large daily flow of professional visitors from abroad attending international meetings. International institutions and firms also attract young Belgian professionals from other parts of Belgium to reside in Brussels (Corijn et al., 2009). All this gives a mosaic characteristic on the several levels to the city of Brussels, which can also be seen in the urban socio-spatial polarization (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009). The city districts of working-class and illegal immigrants can be found in the western parts, whereas the eastern and southern parts of the city as well as the outside suburbs in the east are favoured by middle- and upper class Belgians and foreign highly-skilled professionals. The differences in average taxable annual income per inhabitant (Belgium = 100) vary from 52 in the poorest commune to 114 in the richest commune in the Brussels region (Deboosere et al., 2009). Yet, there are some parts of the city where social classes mix, especially in the centre of the city (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009).

In plural societies where several cultural or ethnic groups reside together within a shared social and political framework there are two implicit models to describe them: melting pot and cultural pluralism (Berry, 1997, 2006a; Berry et al. 2011). In the melting pot model there is a single dominant or mainstream society, and an assumption that various minority groups should be absorbed into the mainstream. In the cultural pluralism model, also called the multicultural model, there is a diversity of ethnocultural groups, where individuals and groups retain their cultural continuity and a sense of their cultural identity, and participate in the social framework of the larger society (Berry, 2006a). The European Union (2004) integration policy corresponds to this multicultural model, stating both the rights to cultural maintenance and full participation for all cultural groups. In Berry's (2006a) acculturation model, multiculturalism corresponds to the integration acculturation strategy on the individual level, and the melting pot corresponds to assimilation. In societies where minorities are not included in the larger society by the dominant group, the two strategies of a larger society are segregation and exclusion. In the segregation model the dominant group demands and enforces minorities to stay separate from the dominant group yet allows them to maintain their own cultural heritage, and in the exclusion model both their

own cultural maintenance and linking to the dominant group are prevented by the dominant group (Berry, 2006a; Berry et al. 2011, 321). Segregation corresponds to the separation on the individual level, and exclusion to marginalization.

In Belgium, multilingualism and multiculturalism are part of the constitution, but in practice multiculturalism is not pursued as much as in other countries that have adopted a multicultural policy (e.g. Canada and Australia) (Sabatier & Boutry, 2006). One of the problems is that while immigration is a federal responsibility, the integration policies (social programmes, school, employment, housing) are the responsibilities of communities. Constant disagreements between the French-speaking and Flemish-speaking political parties complicate matters further. UNESCO and the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office financed a large academic research in 1998-2002 concerning the Belgian immigration policy. The results of the research give a rather bleak picture of the situation. According to Florence and Martiniello (2005, 62): "The research shows that there is no systematic effort on the part of the authorities to monitor the participation of ethnic minorities in the different spheres of society. At present, no systematic data except on nationality exist that would allow people's ethnic origin to be taken into account. Consequently, it is difficult to judge how the situation of ethnic minorities is developing and to assess the effectiveness of policy measures aimed at equality of opportunities." Criticism toward immigration policy can be found in other articles, as well. Corijn et al. (2009, 7) write: "Although foreign immigration continues at a strong rate ... there is no integrated policy for reception and integration." So in general, the Belgian multicultural policy is in fact far from ideal.

Regarding the target group of the study, their situation is different from the immigrants of third world nationals. According to the Treaty of Rome in 1957 (Europa, 2010) EU citizens are provided with free entry and residence in the EU countries. The treaty also implies free access to the labour market and equal treatment regarding social and economic rights. Expatriates in general are considered educated people who move to another country for professional reasons or to seek overseas experience (Gatti, 2009). So the status on entry is very different for these people than for many immigrants from other parts of the world. Also their daily life evidently differs from the life of third world immigrants, in terms of available choices concerning e.g. living area, schools the children go to, social networks, etc. However, in Brussels both the working environment and the surroundings in daily life are usually highly multicultural for expatriates, but the other side of multiculturalism (illegal immigrants, asylum seekers) may only touch them occasionally, for example on a metro trip or in the streets. One could say Brussels has two faces of multiculturalism: one for international expats and functionaries, and another for illegal immigrants. In between there are generations of immigrants both from European countries and the surrounding areas, who form a substantial

group of a more or less settled and integrated immigration population, and who are in everyday contact with the local population (Snauwaert et al., 2003).

5.1.1 BRUSSELS EXPATRIATES

As mentioned in the chapters above, some 10-15% of the Brussels population consists of highly skilled expatriates and their families (Kesteloot & Loopmans, 2009). EU institutions are the largest employer, with some 40,000 people working in them (Commission, Parliament, Council of Ministers, etc.). NATO has a staff of 4,000 employees. With parallel activities such as lobbying, press, regional delegations, embassies, and international firms the figure is estimated to be over 100,000, consisting of highly skilled migrants from all over the world (Corijn et al., 2009). In Brussels these expatriates are often referred to as the *expat community*. In publications targeted towards expatriates they are described as and presumed to be highly paid, young, temporary residents, who often do not speak French and mostly keep to themselves with minimum contacts with Belgians (Gatti, 2009). In a research of highly skilled expatriates in Brussels, Gatti (2009) tried to clarify what this *community* in reality means and came to the conclusion that the idea of a homogeneous expat community is mainly created by stakeholder's superficial images and that basic definitions do not apply in reality to expatriates in Brussels. On the basis of 33 in-depth interviews on the subject, he concluded: "Speaking of an expat community is quite an arbitrary choice, as the sense of community seems to be weak and not shared universally" (Gatti, 2009, 12-13). Even though Gatti's study does not discuss the adaptation of expatriates, it does refer to the equivocal picture of expatriates' role and place in the larger community, as well as the mismatch between stereotypes and reality concerning expatriates.

5.2 LANGUAGE AND RELIGION IN BELGIUM

In Belgium the official languages are French, Flemish and German, but German is only spoken in small areas near the German border, and it is not commonly used elsewhere. The country has three main regions: French-speaking Wallonia, Flemish-speaking Flanders, and the officially bilingual Brussels capital region. It has been estimated that 15-20% of Belgian nationals in Brussels has Flemish (Dutch) and 80-85% has French as their mother tongue. However, these are only estimations, since it has been forbidden since 1961 to enquire about language affiliation in order to avoid political tensions (Jacobs et al. 1999). It is also worthwhile to mention that in the Brussels region part of the Belgian population is completely bilingual (Jacobs et al. 1999). All administrators working in any of the 19 municipalities in the

Brussels capital region have to be completely bilingual. However, that is not a requirement on the regional administration level. The majority of Belgians in the Brussels region has French as their mother tongue, whereas in Belgium as a whole Flemish is more commonly the mother tongue: approximately 57% of the population speak Flemish as their mother tongue, 42% French and 1% German.

Belgium is predominantly a Roman Catholic country, but the Belgian state recognizes and subsidizes the advocates of both secularism and five cults (Catholic, Protestant, Anglican, Jewish, Islamic). Private networks coexist along with official religious educational networks. Several groups have their own churches or places of worship, religious leaders and institutions. Finland has a Protestant chapel and an active Finnish Seamen's mission both in Brussels and Antwerp (which in Brussels mainly serves Finnish families residing in Brussels, as well as transient truck drivers).

5.3 FINLAND AS A PLACE OF ORIGIN

Compared to Belgium and many other European countries, Finland is sparsely inhabited. Finland has a population of about 5.3 million inhabitants, and the population density is only 17.6/km² (Tilastokeskus, 2011). Even in the most populated region of Uusimaa the population density is only about half of that of Belgium, being 168.5 inhabitants/km². In Helsinki the population density reaches 2753 inhabitants/km² (Kunnat, 2011), which is still less than a half the figure for Brussels. In Finland the population is also highly monocultural; only 3.6% of the population has foreign nationality, and even in the Helsinki area, where there are more foreigners than in other parts of the country, the percentage is only 8.4 (Väestöliitto, 2012). The official languages are Finnish and Swedish, the Swedish-speaking minority being about 6% of the population (Tilastokeskus, 2011). Regarding religion, the Evangelic Lutheran Church and the Orthodox Church are public corporations under law. Most Finns belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church (80.6%) and some 1.1% to the Orthodox Church. Under the Finnish Constitution, everyone living in Finland has freedom of religion. Other registered religious communities in Finland are e.g. the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Catholic Church and the Evangelical Free Church (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010).

Income differentials are smaller in Finland than the European average. The highest-income decile in Finland was 5.3-fold that of the lowest-income decile in 2010. It is considerably less than in the countries with the highest income differentials, where it was more than tenfold (Latvia and Bulgaria). (Statistics Finland, 2013.)

5.4 THE CULTURAL DISTANCE BETWEEN THE BRUSSELS REGION AND FINLAND

Belgium and Finland are both Western European countries, so in terms of cultural distance they are regarded as being quite close to each other. Some differences can be found, nevertheless, as can already be deduced from the chapters above. The population density in Belgium, and in particular in the Brussels region is much higher than even in the Helsinki area. Another striking difference is the highly multicultural composition of the population in Brussels compared to the rather homogenous population in Finland. In both countries the predominant religion is Christian, but in Finland it is Protestant, and in Belgium Catholic. And, of course, the language is different in the two countries. Regarding values, I will next review some studies made of both cultural and individual-level values.

5.5 VALUES IN FINLAND AND BELGIUM

Like other aspects of cultural distance, the cultural value differences within Europe are smaller than compared to other continents in the world. Nevertheless, some differences do exist and are worth reviewing. In Hofstede's study about cultural values, Belgium (65) has a higher power distance than Finland (33) (scale 0-100), (Hofstede, 2001, 87).¹⁷ Hofstede explains the difference in power distance between Latin countries in Southern Europe and Protestant countries in Northern Europe as a matter of historical roots and different religions. He claims that the areas in Southern Europe have a greater power distance because they once belonged to the Roman Empire. This past laid the ground for Roman Catholicism, with the supreme authority of the Pope and the intermediate authority of the priests. In Northern Protestant countries Max Weber's Puritan Protestant ethics deny earthly authority, leaving the only authority to God, and this had a profound influence on the concept of authority in Northern European societies (Hofstede, 2001, 111-114). The religious boundary in Europe goes between Belgium and the Netherlands, and continues in dividing Catholic Southern Germany from Protestant Northern Germany. A similar division can be seen in Schwartz's (2004, 2006) cultural values, as well as in individual value surveys (European Social Survey, 2003) done with Schwartz's questionnaire. Schwartz (2003, 13) writes: "All of the traditionally Catholic countries plus the one Orthodox country, Greece, attribute relatively high importance to values of submitting the self to external expectations and low importance to self-direction values. The opposite is true of the historically Protestant nations." However, for some reason Finland, otherwise considered individualistic, is

¹⁷ Hofstede's (2001) value dimensions were reviewed in chapter 3.4.

closer to Poland, Czech, Hungary and Slovenia with higher rankings of conformity than other Northern European countries (Schwartz, 2003). Since I concentrate in this study on the Brussels area where 50% of the population is of foreign origin, it would be difficult to describe the individual values of this population. I shall therefore now go on to discuss Finnish individual values.

5.5.1 INDIVIDUAL VALUES IN FINLAND

Since the target group of this study are Finnish expatriates, a closer look into Finnish individual values is necessary. Puohiniemi (2002, 2006) has studied Finnish values with representative samples from 1991. In the sample in 2005 benevolence was the most important value in the hierarchy (Puohiniemi, 2006, 21). As was mentioned in the chapter above, conformity has been on average higher in Finland than in the rest of Western Europe, being in third place in the value hierarchy. Another distinctive feature is security, which is in second place. A similar ranking was found in the study of Pyhtää in 2007 (Helkama, 2012a). Both Helkama (2009) and Puohiniemi (2006) have been pondering the reasons for this emphasis on conformism in an otherwise individualistic and universalistic culture (universalism is in the third rank with conformity). Puohiniemi (2006, 64) has suggested that conformity may have a different meaning for different age groups: the veterans of war value more traditional modes of conformity, whereas younger generations value the conformity that they find in the internet. So basically this would mean that different age groups value conformity, but it is present in different domains of life. Puohiniemi (2006, 22-23) explains the historical roots of conformity, but the original reasons for conformity are left open. Helkama writes that the history of social movements like labour and temperance movements have their impact on both definition and change of values, along with economic and democratic development (2009, 73-74).

As in other studies in the world, in Finland the hierarchy of values is different if studied by age, gender, educational level or occupation. Puohiniemi (2002, 2006) has discussed the topic at length and has argued that different effects of age together with time affect the priority of values more than education or gender. Van Herk & Poortinga (2011) reached similar results in their research of 195 regions in Europe. In studies on values in general it has been shown that younger people value more self-enhancement higher order values, whereas conservation values become more important when people get older (e.g. Puohiniemi, 2002, 2006; Schwartz, 2005; Schwartz et al. 2001; Verkasalo, Lönnqvist, Lipsanen & Helkama, 2009).

Since in this study the Finnish expatriates are mostly highly educated, I shall review some Puohiniemi's findings about values and education. The major distinction concerns self-direction, which in the 2005 sample was one rank higher, above conformity, with people of higher academic education.

Other studies have shown that openness to change increases along with education (e.g. Helkama & Seppälä, 2006; Pohjanheimo, 2005; Verkasalo et al., 2009). Similar findings apply to studies made in other countries (e.g. Schwartz et al. 2001). In conclusion, Schwartz's words about value priorities are appropriate:

“There is much more to say about differences in national value priorities in Europe, but it is equally important to recognize that there are people within every country who give high importance to values not considered important by their fellow nationals and those who give little or no importance to the values their fellows consider most important. That is, within every country there is a great deal of variation in the value priorities of individual people. These individual differences are extremely significant for understanding the attitudes and behaviors of people in Europe.”

(Schwartz, 2003, 13.)

6 AIMS OF THE STUDY

As could be noticed from the theoretical section, adaptation to a foreign environment has been studied for decades and from numerous points of view. Values and empathy have also been part of these studies. The aim of this study is to introduce new viewpoints to this line of study. The main interest of this study is to investigate adaptation to a multicultural environment, and the *change* experienced by expatriates in the process. It is conducted by studying adaptation from several different research frames. The first task is to inquire into different components of adaptation to a multicultural environment expressed by the expatriates themselves, and to find the dimensions of adaptation. By dimensions of adaptation I denote the *characteristics* that facilitate and are part of the adaptation process in a foreign environment. The dimensions are qualities and attributes the individuals either possess before moving or learn and gain during their living abroad. In addition, any other factors that are found in the texts which have an effect on adaptation are examined. These include more practical issues, such as language ability and social networks. The second task is to find out how individuals differ in their adaptation, in other words, to classify respondents into different types of adaptation. Third, to notify if additional topics turn up in the texts. Fourth, to study individual values and aspects of empathy, and their interconnections with different aspects of adaptation. I will use the MPQ dimensions (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001) as the main frame of reference to compare the results, but the other theories and models of adaptation are also compared to the results. However, in current cross-cultural literature there are no comparable theories corresponding to the types of adaptation. This is a line of study which has not been implemented before and has a potential to bring new insights to research on adaptation to a multicultural environment. My aim is also to investigate how Schwartz's (1992) individual values and Davis's (1994) aspects of empathy are connected to the dimensions and types of adaptation retrieved by qualitative methods. I intend to use mixed methods in order to find the possible connections.

6.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDY

The study is composed of two phases. The two major goals of the first phase are: 1) To search for the dimensions of adaptation and inquire into the process how dimensions are formed as well as to investigate the varying subfactors of which the dimensions are *composed*. 2) To classify the respondents into different types of adaptation by analyzing the main similarities and differences between the respondents' answers. These topics are usually studied using quantitative methods, while I wish to bring out the conceptions and understanding of the subjects of the study themselves. The answers to

both items can be best found using qualitative methods. The research questions for the first phase are:

- 1) Which dimensions of adaptation do the respondents produce? Which components are they comprised of? How do these dimensions develop? Do the respondents describe a change or do they feel they already possessed these qualities before moving abroad?
- 2) What types of adaptation can be distinguished from qualitative data? What are the criteria dividing the respondents into different types?
- 3) Are there other topics linked to the adaptation brought up by the respondents that are worth investigating in addition to the dimensions and types of adaptation?

The results of these questions form the base for further questions to be answered. In the second phase, the goal is to study correlations between dimensions of adaptation, types of adaptation, other aspects of adaptation, values, and empathy. As reviewed in the theoretical part, significant correlations between values and cross-cultural adaptation as well as migration have been found. I am interested in how individual values are related to the adaptation described by the target persons themselves. Regarding empathy, the concept itself is part of adaptation theories, as described in the theoretical section. My interest to this connection is how different aspects of Davis's (1994) empathy model relate to adaptation. The research questions for the second phase are:

- 1) What is the value rank order in this study and is it consistent with studies made of corresponding samples in Finland? My hypothesis is that expatriates have a higher regard for universalism and the higher order dimension of openness to change since these values reflect a readiness for change and an understanding of differences, attributes needed in a foreign milieu. Consequently, conservation values should be ranked lower in the expatriate sample than among Finns in their home country.
- 2) Do the work values in the expatriate sample locate in Schwartz's value circle as they do in other samples where work values are included?
- 3) Do individual values or aspects of empathy correlate significantly with dimensions of adaptation?
- 4) Are there other variables that correlate with dimensions of adaptation?
- 5) Are there significant differences in values or empathy aspects between the types of adaptation?
- 6) How do the dimensions of adaptation locate in different types?
- 7) Which other variables correlate significantly with types of adaptation?

7 METHODOLOGY

7.1 THE TARGET GROUP

The participants in this study are Finnish expatriates and expatriate spouses. The participants were required to have stayed at least six months in Belgium, so that the initial settling stage was already over. I included in the study both expatriates who had temporary contracts as well as those who had a permanent posting, but who were not sure how long they would stay. With this definition I excluded those who could be called immigrants rather than expatriates. Of expatriates who reside in Brussels a substantial proportion is estimated to be those who have a permanent contract, but who still consider themselves to be staying “for the time being” (Gatti, 2009).

The data consists of 52 interviews and questionnaires. Of the 52 participants 32 were women (61.5%) and 20 men (38.5%). The age range was between 29 and 60 years, mean being 39 years ($SD = 7.3$). About half of the data (25 participants, 48%) consists of expatriates who moved because of work assignment, and the other half (27 participants, 52%) were expatriate spouses.¹⁸ Regarding the gender distribution of expatriates and spouses, of the 20 males 13 were expatriates and 7 were expatriate spouses; of the 32 women 12 were expatriates and 20 expatriate spouses. So in other words, amongst the expatriates about half were men and half women, but the proportion of women was far higher in the section of expatriate spouses.

Varying work statuses were found among spouses: some had a permanent post, others were working on a contract, some doing part-time, free-lance or voluntary work, and some were housewives or househusbands. In general the interviewees were highly educated: 43 of the respondents (82.7%) had at least one university degree; 9 persons (17.3%) had a college or vocational degree. Regarding the family situation, 41 persons (79%) were married, and the majority had at least one child (36 respondents, 69%). However, some who had children were single, whereas some had children who were already grown up, and had moved out. A few had a spouse living in another country at the time of the interview. 8 participants (15%) had a spouse of another nationality than Finnish, and one participant was of non-Finnish origin.

7.1.1 TIME PERIOD SPENT ABROAD

In this study it was relevant to investigate both the time the respondents had lived in Belgium, as well as the years spent abroad altogether. About two-

¹⁸ The term expatriate refers here to those respondents who moved for assignment reasons, and expatriate spouse refers to those who initially moved after their spouse received an assignment (the term used e.g. by Ali et al., 2003).

thirds of respondents (36 persons; 69%) had lived in Belgium for at least two years, and 44 persons (85%) had lived abroad for over two years. Most respondents had lived abroad before coming to Belgium (42 persons; 81%). The time how long the respondents had lived abroad altogether (in Belgium and other countries before) was coded within 6 months accuracy, and the mean was 6.5 years (SD = 4.09). The shortest time was 1.5 years and the longest 17 years (see Figure 2).

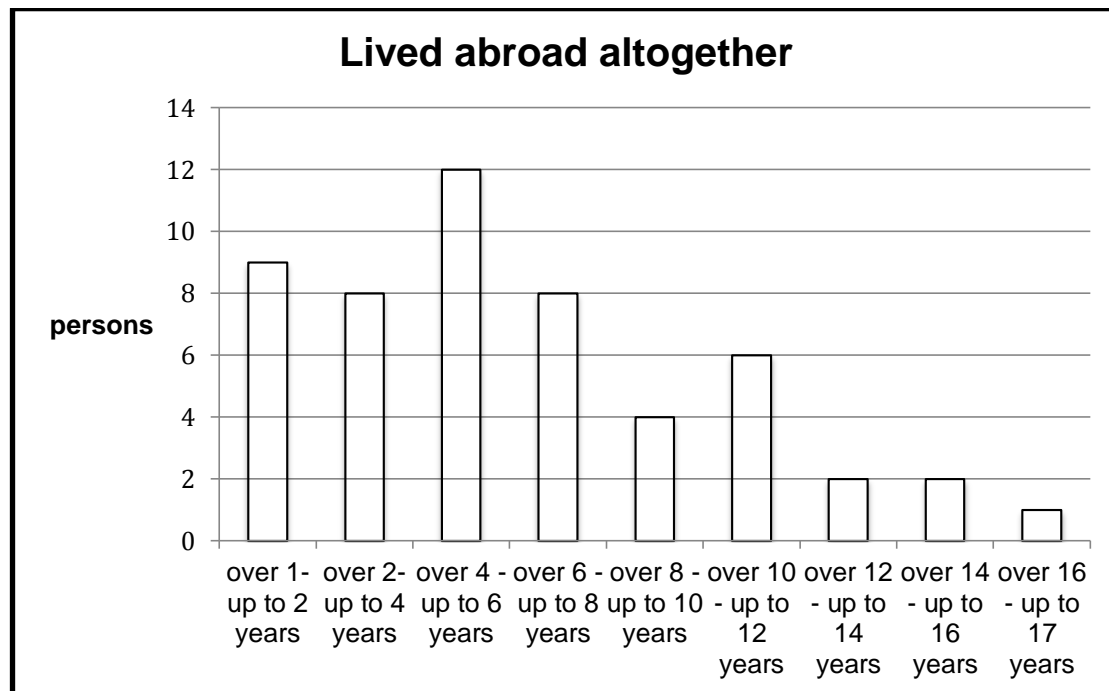


Figure 2 Time spent abroad at the time of interview

7.1.2 LENGTH OF ASSIGNMENT

As mentioned earlier, people coming to Brussels on work assignments do not always know how long they will stay. This was in general the case amongst the respondents as well. Since the length of stay in most cases has an effect on adaptation, I will describe in general the situation of the respondents.

There were five individuals who knew they would return to Finland within six months, and two were leaving Belgium for another country. In addition, three respondents knew they would stay a certain number of years and then return. The overwhelming majority did not know exactly how long they would stay. “For the time being”, was the most common answer for how long they intended to stay. There were those who presumed they would stay until they retired, others who had a permanent job (or their spouses had), but had not

decided if they would stay “until retirement” (the definition of the longest possible period mentioned) or not; some said they did not intend to move away in the near future but would “keep the doors open”. There were also individuals who had an assignment of a certain period, but a possibility to extend it or were considering applying for another post in Brussels. Quite a few also said they would probably move back to Finland “one day” but did not know when.

7.2 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The data was collected in autumn 2006 and during 2007. Six test interviews were made, and the interview structure was found to be adequate with a few minor changes. Two participants lived away from the Brussels region, but since their living area consisted of several nationalities, they could be included in the study with regard to the effect of multiculturalism in adaptation. The participants were found through advertisements placed in a Finnish-community magazine (*Parlööri*) and noticeboard in the Finnish presbytery as well as by snowball method (people tell about the study to the others, who then volunteer to take part as well). In the advertisement the subject of the study was defined as “expatriate secondment as learning experience”. More accurate information was given before the interview.

The place and time of each interview was defined to be the most suitable for the target person in question. Some invited me to their office, some asked to have the interview done at their home or in a café, or in some other public or private place of their choice. Before the interviews the respondents were reminded of confidentiality. Interviews were coded with indicative numbers, and were recorded for later treatment. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 3 hours, an average being from one hour to 90 minutes. The length of the interview depended partly on how busy the interviewee was: some individuals volunteered to answer the study on a lunch break, some on their day off, and some in between their daily activities. The participants did not get any compensation for taking part in the study.

Immediately after the interview the questionnaire about values and empathy was given to the respondents. It took on average 10 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. The interviewer waited while the respondents answered the questions, so each questionnaire was immediately returned. In mixed methods research this is called parallel sampling, as qualitative and quantitative components are collected simultaneously (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 187).

7.3 METHODS AND DATA PROCESSING

This study is composed of two phases based on research questions. The first phase consists of interview data and qualitative data analysis; the second phase consists of survey data, as well as data converted into numerical form from the interviews.

Mixed-methods design was chosen to be the tool for analysing and interpreting the findings for its applicability to the questions at hand. The method used is called *conversion mixed data analysis design* (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 269). (See Figure 3 for procedure of the study.)

In mixed methods research it is recommended to present the results *in process*. In other words, the inference denotes both a process and an outcome (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 288). Following this guideline the results are explained along with data analyses with a “continuous feedback loop between the data, data analysis results, and the conclusions, until a satisfactory level of certainty is attained about these conclusions” (ibid., 288). In this way the results cumulate towards the end until all gathered data is included, analysed and interpreted. In the final chapters the compatibilities, consistencies and controversies are discussed, both within the study at hand, and compared to current literature.

Inferences in mixed methods embody as well the emic and etic constructions of the phenomenon. This means that inferences are constructed of three elements: 1) respondents’ expressions, perceptions and interpretations; 2) writers interpretations of the data and 3) recapitulation of these two (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 288). This guideline is followed as well in this study in order to increase the trustworthiness of the results.

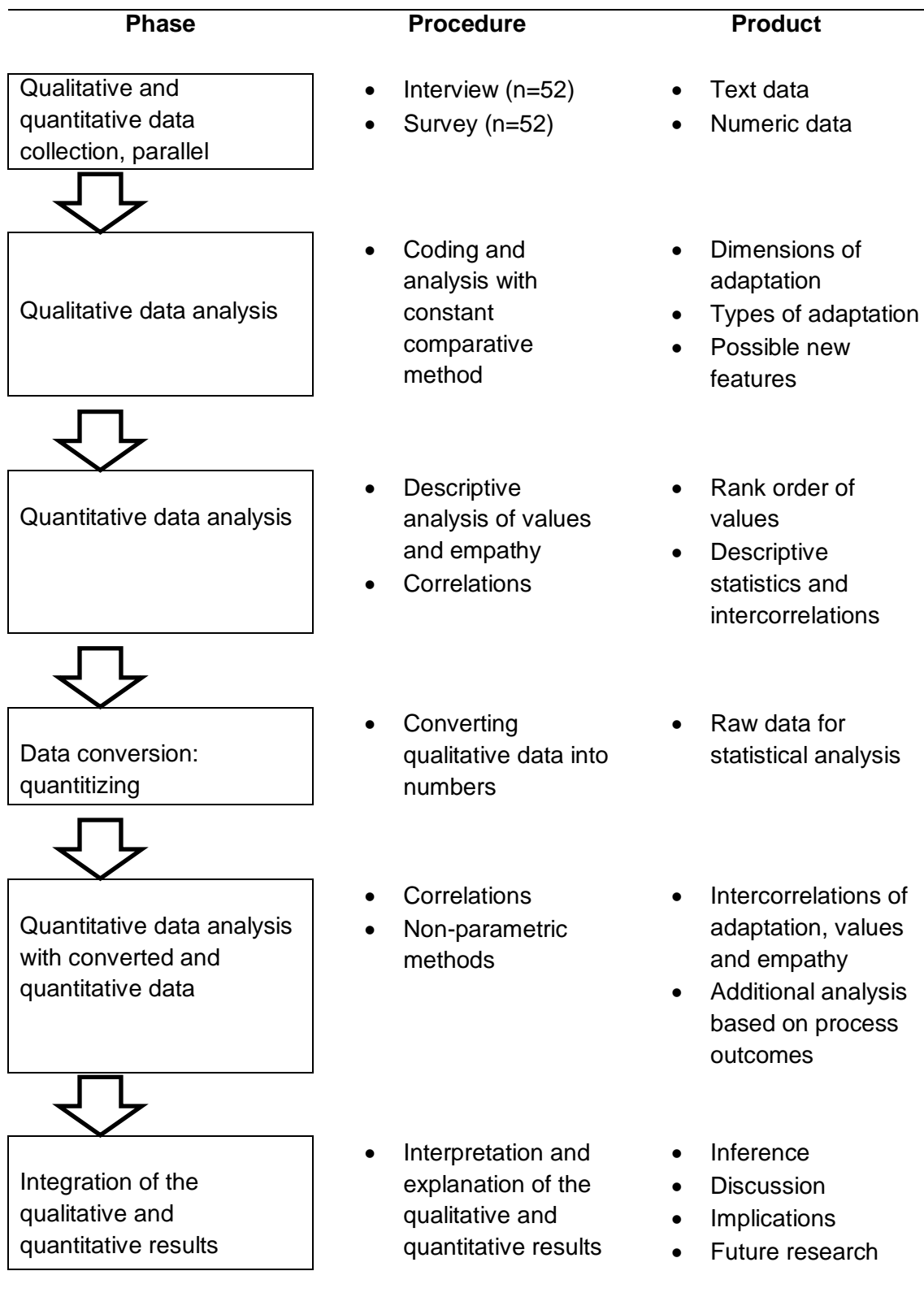


Figure 3 Visual model for conversion mixed data analysis in the study of Brussels expatriates

7.3.1 THE INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

The interview structure can best be described as being between a focused interview and a semi-standardized one (Flick, 2006, 150-158). The questions in the interviews (Appendix A in Finnish, Appendix C in English) were designed to lead the respondents to think back on their experiences from the time they decided to move until the present and tell about incidents in their daily lives. Through this they were led to ponder how these experiences had affected them. Furthermore, the respondents were encouraged to talk about any issues concerning their life abroad that they felt were important.

The basic idea was not to replicate former adaptation questionnaires, especially since they have been designed for quantitative studies. However, former questionnaires concerning adaptation were reviewed, since the focus of the present study is on similar issues. To familiarize myself with questions asked in quantitative research, e.g. Furnham & Bochner's (1982, 179) social situations questionnaire and Sagiv & Schwartz's (1995) questionnaire of readiness for out-group contact were reviewed. Prior examination of cross-cultural adaptation theories and studies inspired in forming the questions, but the questions did not involve any actual concepts derived from adaptation theories. The assumption was that by *focusing on everyday social encounters and actions*, the components of adaptation could be found in the texts in a more authentic way. There were also no questions about values and empathy, with the exception of the question about change, where the possible value change was asked in general (question 31). No particular values were introduced in that question either. The aim was to create a conversational atmosphere in the interview rather than a formal enquiry. Before the interview started, I told each respondent that any information concerning life abroad was valid and interesting, and that he or she should feel free to mention any issues that came to mind.

The interviews started with background questions about age, family relations, education and work, the length of the stay, language proficiency, etc. (questions 1-9). In order to lead the respondents to think back in time, two introductory questions were asked: the reason why they decided to leave and how they found the dwelling (questions 10 and 11). Questions continued with actual topics concerning living abroad: social relationships (questions 12-14, 16), communication issues (e.g. questions 15, 33), experiences in daily life (e.g. question 19) and, in the work environment (15b). Two particular themes were included in the questions: 1) The differences and similarities in various life domains and cultures (questions 21-25, e.g. "What differences and on the other hand similarities have you noticed in culture and in life in general compared to Finland?"), and 2) the process of change due to living abroad (questions 27, 28 and 31, for example: "While living abroad, have you needed to change your behaviour or style somehow? Or do you feel you have changed,

but not “forcefully”? If you have changed, describe this change, how and why?”).

Altogether the interview consisted of 34 questions. Question 15a, concerning impressions of behavioural patterns between different nationalities, was investigated by giving the interviewees a text to read (Appendix B in Finnish, Appendix D in English); the respondents were then asked to say if they had any opinions about the topic. Question 20, regarding expectations before leaving Finland and the answers to it were only analysed in cases where the answer was linked to other issues discussed. The reason for this was that the question was retrospective. Especially questions about expectations asked in retrospective are widely criticized in current cross-cultural studies literature.

7.3.2 THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE QUALITATIVE DATA AND CODING PROCEDURE

As altogether 52 expatriates were interviewed, almost 1,000 pages of text data were collected. The interviews were precisely transcribed, and pauses, laughter and sighs were also included in order for the interviews to be analysed in a form which was as authentic as possible. This was necessary considering the nature of the interviews: even though there was an interview structure, the additional data, the topics the respondents felt were important and wanted to discuss, did not necessarily fit into the categories based on the questionnaire structure.

The texts were coded using an Atlas.ti 6.2 program. According to Flick (2006, 349) Atlas.ti is based on the approach of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and theoretical coding. The coding technique in this study at hand could best be described, like in grounded theory, as open, axial, and later selective coding (Flick, 2006, 296), also called the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 254). At first open coding was used to form codes according to the content of the texts. This technique produced 3,630 codes that formed a base for further analyses. From this point on axial coding was introduced, and only the codes that were connected to the adaptation were treated. 101 code families were formed. The first task was to retrieve codes that described the characteristics reflecting the adaptation or the process of adaptation, as bases for the dimensions. *Codes* were compared to each other, more general units formed, until the main dimensions were distinguished. Second, different types of adaptation were formed. This was conducted by searching for major distinguishing and unifying factors, and classifying *respondents* into different types. The criteria how I formed the types were not the actual facts in every case, but how respondents themselves described factors which had an effect as well as my interpretation of the text. The classifications were made using a constant

comparative method, taking into account the interview as a whole. The classification of the types actually owes to interpretative phenomenological analysis as well (Smith, 2004; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), taking into account how respondents make sense of their personal experiences as well as the researcher's interpretation of these personal experiences. The types were based on major differences and similarities between the interviews.

So, basically theoretical coding, which is used in grounded theory, was the main coding technique in this study. The final formulations of the data results were done by hand, which is also recommended in some guidebooks (e.g. Koskela, 2007). Nevertheless, the collection of data was not conducted according to grounded theory guidelines. In grounded theory data collection is done simultaneously with analysis, and the interview formula changes along with the research. In this study the number of interviews was decided beforehand, and the same interview structure was used for all interviews. However, following Charmaz's (2003) recommendation, the respondents were encouraged to talk about the topics they felt were important, including those outside the interview structure.

7.3.3 MEASURES IN THE SECOND PHASE

The second phase of the study entails Schwartz's value questionnaire (Portrait Value Questionnaire, PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 1999), Davis's empathy questionnaire (Interpersonal Reactivity Index, IRI) (Davis, 1994), and the data converted into numerical form from the qualitative data. The questionnaire on values and empathy was a Finnish version of the survey, which has been translated and back-translated for studies in Finland (used e.g. in Myyry, Juujärvi & Pessø., 2010; Silfver, Helkama, Lönnqvist & Verkasalo, 2008). Value rank order was as well examined and compared to studies conducted in Finland. The main aim of the second phase was to search for intercorrelations to further illuminate different aspects and components of adaptation to a multicultural environment.

Individual value priorities were measured using the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 1999). The PVQ used in this study consisted of 42 items. The items are brief descriptions of people, like: "It is important to him/her to listen to people who are different from him/her. Even if he/she disagrees with them, he/she still wants to understand them." The respondents are asked to evaluate each description as to how much this person is similar to him/her on a 6-point scale from 1 (not like me at all) to 6 (very much like me). In several value studies made in Finland with the Schwartz value survey, work has been regarded as an additional value. In the questionnaire given to the expatriates, two statements concerning work values were included as well in order to have the results comparable with studies carried out in Finland. The original Portrait Value Questionnaire measures the

10 basic values of Schwartz's individual value theory: self-direction, universalism, benevolence, conformity, tradition, security, power, achievement, hedonism, and stimulation. In the Portraits Value Questionnaire alphas of the sum variables ranged from .44 (work) to .89 (achievement). As with other studies using PVQ, some alphas were rather low. However, in Schwartz's value studies it is considered that hypothesized associations of these value scores support their validity, and are therefore used as such (see e.g. Schwartz & Rubel-Lifschitz, 2009). The Cronbach alphas for the values were as follows: self-direction .51 (four items); universalism .83 (six items); benevolence .46 (four items); conformity .72 (four items); tradition .46 (four items); security .70 (five items); power .71 (three items); achievement .89 (four items); hedonism .83 (three items); stimulation .82 (three items); and work .44 (two items).

Empathy was measured with the Davis (1994) Interpersonal Reactivity Index, IRI. The questionnaire contains four seven-item subscales, each tapping a separate facet of empathy: perspective taking (PT), empathic concern (EC), personal distress (PD) or fantasy (F). The respondents are asked to evaluate each item on a 5-point scale how it describes him/herself, from 0 (does not describe me well) to 4 (describes me very well). Altogether the questionnaire consists of 28 items, like: "Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how *I* would feel if I were in their place" (PT). Some questions are asked in a reversed form, for example: "I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies" (PD) (R). On Davis's empathy scale all sum variables reached generally acceptable reliabilities, Cronbach's alphas being as follows: perspective taking .74; empathic concern .81; personal distress .76; and fantasy .84.

Since the converted variables are formed based on the results in the first phase, they will be recited in the beginning of the statistical analysis results. In the second phase of the study non-parametric statistical analyses were applied on account of the small sample size, and inequality in variances.

8 THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST PHASE

8.1 CHARACTERISTIC BACKGROUND VARIABLES OF THE SAMPLE

Before proceeding to the actual results of the dimensions and types of adaptation I review some basic variables of the target group, as well as some other findings that are discussed in cross-cultural adaptation studies.

8.1.1 LANGUAGE ABILITY

In cross-cultural adaptation theories language knowledge is unanimously considered to be an important ability (e.g. Masgoret & Ward, 2006; Ward & Kennedy, 1993b). Defining language ability in the study at hand was, however, more problematic than usual, due to the unique nature of the Brussels region. As mentioned earlier, both French and Flemish are official languages in Brussels, but the official language in the surrounding suburban areas varies from commune to another. For example in Kraainem and Wezembeek-Oppem, popular areas among foreign expatriates, the official language is Flemish. I decided to take this into account in the interview, and at the beginning of the interview the respondents were asked their language ability in all the languages they spoke and the level of that ability. I report briefly the overall language ability of the respondents in three languages mostly used by the Finnish expatriates in the Brussels area: French, Flemish and English.

All 52 respondents reported that they spoke fluent English. 22 respondents (42%) were also fluent in French, and 5 persons (10%) were fluent in Flemish, of which one also spoke fluent French. However, almost all respondents spoke at least some French or Flemish, or some both. It may be more illuminating to see how many did *not* speak French or Flemish. 6 respondents (12%) told they did not speak the languages of the country. All the others had at least some kind of ability (20 persons, 39%), of which many were studying one or other language at that time, and as mentioned above, half of the respondents spoke either French or Flemish fluently (Table 2).

Table 2 *Language ability, French or Flemish*

Knowledge of French/Flemish	N	%
Does not speak	6	11.5
Basic knowledge to moderate	20	38.5
Speaks fluently	26	50.0
Total	52	100.00

8.1.2 FRIENDSHIP NETWORKS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Another basic variable crucial in adaptation studies is the nature of social networks, also conceptualized as social support. In Brussels, where one-third of the inhabitants are foreigners, and half of the population of foreign origin, the concept of social networks needs to be examined taking into consideration the highly multicultural nature of the place. The division into those who have locals as friends and those socializing with expatriates would not greatly illuminate the social relationships. In the current study I chose to see more closely whether the respondents have other nationalities than Finns as their friends (enquiring into relationships with Belgians, as well), or if they lived in a Finnish enclave, and if so, the reasons for this.

Altogether three groups were formed: persons who mainly socialized with other Finns in their free-time (17 persons, 33%), those who clearly had multicultural friendship networks (33 persons, 64%), and those who had no friends in Brussels at all, 2 persons (4%) (Table 3).

Table 3 *Friendship networks*

Friendship network in Brussels	N	%
No friends	2	3.8
Mainly Finnish friends	17	32.7
Multicultural friendship network	33	63.5
Total	52	100.0

The majority of respondents had multicultural friendship networks, and practically all these individuals had at least one or two Belgians in that network, as well. Some individuals mainly had Belgians as friends, but in general the international social network was composed of several different nationalities. It appeared from the texts that if the interviewed had multicultural social networks, and yet no Belgians were amongst them, it was more due to the fact that there were simply no Belgians in their circles of life (e.g. work, or the school that the children attended).

Taking a closer look at those who socialized mainly with other Finns, several reasons came up. I will explain these here, since they clarify the nature of the 'expatriate bubble'. The three main reasons for only having Finnish friends were small children in the family, language problems, and workload. The biggest group were those spouses who stayed home with small children, and some of them, but not all, felt their inability to speak fluent French or Flemish restricted them from going out and trying to make friends with others than Finns. Staying within Finnish network was described as the easiest and

most convenient way of building a social network at the time. Almost all these individuals had come to the country with a baby, and they had no previous contacts to anybody in Belgium. The other major group were individuals who said their work took up all their time. Some said that they had very little social life outside work; others said they had no time to make friends, and socialized with the people the spouse had got to know. In such cases, the spouse was home with small children and had got to know other Finns. Insufficient foreign language skill (of the country) was also an additional reason for some who worked long hours. Yet another reason, which combined with the former reasons, was that arrival had taken place less than a year ago, and a good social network had not yet been built up. Most individuals in this group did have some acquaintances with other nationalities, but all their friends were Finns. There were also several persons who had a multicultural work environment, but who socialized only with Finns in their free time.

The main reasons having only Finnish friends or having no friends at all, can be described as a triangle (Figure 4); the three reasons were small children at home, long working hours and language problems. For some it was one of these reasons, whereas for others it was a combination of two of them, and for some it was the all three reasons.

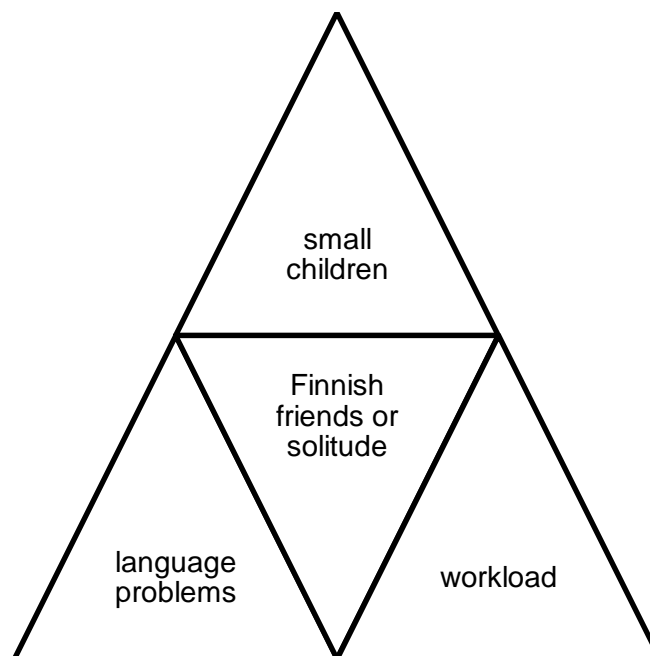


Figure 4 Reasons for having only Finnish friends or no friends

An important detail, connected to social networks in Belgium, were the social contacts expatriates kept up with both their home country as well as with other countries. There were numerous comments about distant social relationships the respondents were keeping up through various devices: telephone, skype, e-mails, messengers, etc. The contacts were quite regular since the means of communication have become easier, opportunities to choose the ways one communicates have broadened, and the prices of these means have lowered dramatically. While it is no doubt advantageous to everybody to have this possibility to communicate nationally and globally, it may have a different meaning for some who have less face to face contacts in a new country. For some individuals contacts with their own countrymen in Brussels provided social support, and for others contacts with multiple nationalities in Brussels. Furthermore, distant contacts with the home country as well as with other countries could provide social support to individuals. This was mentioned by many individuals who had satisfactory social networks in Belgium, but the significance was highlighted by those who had not managed to make friends while living abroad.

Yet another source of social support mentioned was the family. 13 of the 40 (33%) who were in a relationship reported that support from one's spouse was significant. Many of these also mentioned that family cohesion had increased abroad.

8.2 FIVE DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTATION

The five main dimensions that were found in the texts were broadmindedness, flexibility, extroversion, self-efficacy, and adventurousness. The dimensions are, for the most part, closely connected to each other, and it is my aim to show the way in which the connections are linked. The dimensions will be described with many quotations coded to them in order to illuminate the nature of the texts and expressions. After each quote I decided to note the gender of the respondent and also the time a person had spent abroad at the time of the interview, since in this study the time of living abroad is more illuminating than the age of the respondent.

8.2.1 BROADMINDEDNESS

"You realize yourself that the ways of thinking and doing and arranging things that you regarded, or did not even consciously regard as self-evident but you had learned the ways of acting and the habits, you realize they are not self-evident after all, and you cannot really...regard something different through your own habits or ways of living but you should always remember that before you form your opinion you have to think why do we actually do things this way, or

why have we learned it this way. I think it is extremely mind broadening and...you learn a lot about yourself as well when these contrasts occur and you realize that...wait, we have always done this this way, I have never realized before it could be also done that way."

Man, 5 years abroad

Broadmindedness is the concept most often brought up in the interviews. It describes the ability to tolerate issues and people in a broader way, an open mind, and an ability to see things from new perspectives. Broadmindedness also describes how individuals have learned to see past their own learned conventions. The concept of broadmindedness was chosen to be the title of this dimension due to its constant manifestation in the interviews. It was also chosen since it catches most accurately the idea of other categories under it. This dimension brought together such attributes as tolerance, openness, different perspectives, broadminded, "not so black and white", "diverse ways", and non-conformity. Most of these are the actual expressions found in the texts when the respondents described how they have changed, often referring to the multicultural nature of the environment. In addition such concepts as internalization of equality, openness to change and softening in attitudes were brought up in connection to this dimension. Several comments were also made of how one learns to see the world differently as one sees so many different destinies, both good and bad. All these attributes and concepts were coded under three categories that will be described next.

The dimension broadmindedness contains both emotional and cognitive aspects of adaptation on a continuum from tolerance to comprehensive understanding of diversity and different aspects in it. One pole describes the *realization* and *willingness* to see and understand differences around one, and the other pole both the open mind and *the understanding* of different perspectives. I will present the categories under the titles that gather together the various codes mentioned above. They are tolerance, openness, and perspective. Tolerance can be defined as the beginning of broadmindedness, followed by openness. Perspective is the most profound state of broadmindedness.

8.2.1.1 Tolerance

The concept 'tolerance' was brought up, along with explanations about how one learns not only to tolerate but also realize how there are so many different kinds of people and so many different ways of thinking and doing things, and that the way one has learned to live and act is not the only way. The 'softening' of attitudes came up along with this category, as well. The respondents told they had been more 'rigid' before, also referring to a narrower mind and intolerance, which had then changed. Even though the word tolerance may

have a somewhat negative connotation, “to tolerate something”, this is not the case here. The Finnish word “suvaitsevaisuus”, which is translated here as tolerance could also be described with the word broadmindedness. Tolerance was often mentioned as “tolerance toward different cultures” or used alongside of the word “acceptance”.

In daily life the mere presence of several different nationalities was described as having an effect on tolerance. This is an especially interesting detail, since many respondents actually described having become more tolerant *without* communication, realizing that their view had changed due to merely living in a multicultural environment and observing. Seeing other nationalities live their lives in different ways and having different habits affected respondents. Also respondents who felt their language abilities narrowed their possibilities of making contacts described this.

“What I feel is beneficial and good about living here, because you see these other nationalities, I really appreciate that because when you live together here, you see their lives every day, that has an effect on you in the long run, this is a wrong word, but you ‘accept’ ... it kind of brings you a new view on life, you can realize that things can be seen in a different way and not only the way the Finns are used to.”

Man, 2 years abroad

“Tolerance, maybe more tolerance, I mean toward other people, toward diversity, because in Finland, anyway, there are so few foreigners and I had a lot of prejudice back then when I lived in Finland, really, toward blacks and others, even though I felt I am not a racist, but in a way now I have noticed that my attitude has changed a lot in a positive direction, so that I understand the differences better and tolerate them and in a way, in Finland I maybe even hope that there would be more diversity.”

Woman, 2 years abroad

“I have learned, how would I put it, to see and to react to other people and other individuals’ situations and ... how would I... tolerance, I was going to say acceptance, but tolerance catches the meaning in a broader way, so I always think if somebody does something odd, I wonder why he/she does that and then I think, okay, it’s her business, she must have reasons for doing this or that and as long as it doesn’t hurt anybody so what, let her do it and let her be and act that way, I mean in that sense tolerance, don’t the French say that ‘laissez faire’, live and let the others live”.

Woman, 5 years abroad

“There are really really, Spanish, Belgian, Brits, Greeks, there have been Bulgarians, French, Germans, Namibians living on this tiny street of twelve to thirteen houses, and really, nobody loses their nerve or something if someone does things a bit differently so you learn here to be more flexible and tolerant, and it is more or less a must here, since you cannot change the world here around you.”

Man, 5 years abroad

An interesting connection often made in the interviews was the comparison of the homogeneous population in Finland and the multicultural population in Brussels, and its effects on conformity. The respondents described Finnish conformity and obedience strictly to the rules, and regarded this as an opposite to the variety of behaviours seen in everyday life in Brussels.

“It is not dominant here what is actually the Belgian way, this is so international and so different because all the people do things in so many different ways, I mean it is such a spectrum this whole...life here, how people live and how people do things, it is just so...very varying that there is no dominant, so if you compare this to Finland it is so different that there is no, I mean in Finland the whole way of thinking is so homogeneous and to do things and it becomes...this is just the opposite.”

Woman, 10 years abroad

8.2.1.2 Openness

Openness was regularly referred to in the interviews. The respondents talked about openness to different views, habits, appearances and ways of life. It describes the readiness to be open and non-judgmental in unknown situations. Openness in its minimal sense is closer to tolerance, while in other quotes it is described as a precursor to perspective, or is combined with it.

“Approving of all people, I mean to really internalize that. There is a little racist living inside each of us, in every Finn (laughs), how honest you are with yourself about that, how you take it, I mean at least I think that I have needed to get rid of those most ossified attitudes that are somewhere there in the back of my mind,...it’s prejudice and to get rid of prejudice on a different level.”

Man, 2 years abroad

“The life, the circles of life, plus the fact that toward what is your life, is it just here or does it exist elsewhere and how much do you have the courage to leave and move and understand other people, I mean it is openness to other habits.”

Woman, 11 years abroad

Continuing on the same theme, openness to change and the ability to see things from new perspectives can be combined. Quotes here repeat the idea how the environment with its multiple nationalities and cultures moulds one's own views, and how change is indispensable.

“When you see the world, your eyes open, you are not so...stuck to one single view – I mean you become willing to see and do new things and take into account different views. Had I stayed back home, in the same job, done all the same things all the time, lived in the same apartment, I would have been stuck in a rut, I would have become a kind of (laughs) sullen old Finn.”

Man, 15 years abroad

8.2.1.3 Perspective

The perspective category describes how the respondents have learned to understand the differences, and appreciate diversity, in other words they have the ability to see things from the perspectives of others without being judgmental. This is the most profound pole of broadmindedness.

“A kind of mental maturation, and in particular in the way that one notices that many things can be done in different ways and think in different ways, see in a different way, understand in a different way, even this nationality, the Finns, who is really a foreigner, and a stranger, and who has a foreign language, it's us, really, compared to many others.”

Man, 5 years abroad

Those who had friends from different nationalities described the friendships as a richness which deepened and widened one's own perspective. It helped one to see other's way of looking at things in life especially in communication situations.

“Sometimes I feel that now I just do not get it, the logic, of some person of another nationality, but then you get into it, her/his way of thinking...I mean that is the richness and offering that...people are so different, and to be involved in it, not meaning that it would be uncomfortable or insurmountable.”

Woman, 10 years abroad

Those working in a multicultural work environment often described how they have only now, working together with people from several different countries, realized and learned that a problem can be dealt with in many different ways that they had never thought of before, and yet the result is the same. This was also described as leading to understanding that “things are not so black and white”. The learning process, changing one’s view from a narrower to a broader perspective was seen in these quotations. Many respondents described this by comparing how they first thought about things, and how they later learned to interpret situations differently.

“I think I would have a more black and white attitude back there (in Finland) toward this daily life and life in general, but here I have got more shades to it so that everything is not quite as it first seems, but there are so many different ways to deal with issues and the result is the same, and there is a short way and there can be a long way, so that I have become, like, more flexible during these years.”

Woman, 8 years abroad

In the attribute “diverse ways”, respondents also described numerous courses of action where misunderstandings had happened. At times the words were understood, but their meaning was not. Polite manners, some general conventions and everyday expressions had caused some bafflement until the respondents had learned to interpret them accordingly. This subcategory is very close to flexibility, dividing the understanding of the encounters, expressions and conventions into broadmindedness, whereas the actual behavior of oneself is part of the flexibility dimension.

“Let’s say they argued outspokenly (in a meeting), and sometimes even wrangled. I, myself, thought that now this is a matter of life and death, so that there was almost a scuffle sometimes, but I mean, that was their way of expressing themselves, I sat there quiet, I had this

role of a quiet man there, yes, I mean, all the meetings were in French, and when they were spoken with Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Greek dialect, so I really did not understand any of it back then in the beginning, I just knew which topic is being dealt with, good if I knew what they are dealing with, so that yes, very indirect, indirect expressions, twisting and turning. Later I did come to the conclusion that many times probably the end goal or target was the same for everybody, so that yes the issue needs to be dealt with in this way, but the way one approaches the subject is different with everybody and especially with me.”

Man, 12 years abroad

“These people never say things in a direct way, the French influence is so strong and such eloquence that you get to the point little by little, and they never deny anything, so that is if you ask even something at work they say ‘normalement’ and that means that they are not going to do it because they do not say it directly. So when I ask when do I get the papers because I need them, like for example on Wednesday and if he says ‘normalement’ on Wednesday, I know he won’t even try to get them for Wednesday, they use the word ‘normalement’ when they do not even know themselves for sure. So in my opinion it’s maybe, they are a bit more discreet than Finns, I mean a Finn says abruptly (laughs) just ‘yes’ or ‘no’.”

Man, 15 years abroad

Apart from general descriptions how one becomes more broadminded and open, the respondents also reported on incidents where they had seen how inequality can be seen in a different scale from what they were used to. Seeing the huge difference between one’s own life and some others in Brussels had given some respondents a new way of seeing things, where empathic concern was visible.

“She rang the bell, and said that she could use these goods, are they needed? She had been passing by several weeks and noticed they were just lying there, so could I give them to her. I said of course but they are broken, I said to her ‘they are not good’. She replied ‘well, they are good enough for me’. I went totally silent. ... I thought later, you would never come across anything like this in Finland, inequality does not come to your front door, does not ring your doorbell, like it happened to me here.”

Woman, 5 years abroad

8.2.1.4 Broadmindedness in a nutshell

The dimension broadmindedness forms a continuum that starts from tolerance and continues to open mindedness and the internalization of different perspectives. In perspective the most profound extremity describes the internalization of the ability to adopt the perspective of others both cognitively as well as emotionally. Hence the broadmindedness dimension entails both the *willingness and ability to see* in a broader perspective and from different points of views, as well as *tolerance, appreciation and understanding* about the variety of life, e.g. the habits and customs of other cultures. In all subcategories the learning process was distinguishable. Broadmindedness was something some interviewees felt they already possessed to some extent before moving abroad, but said that they had internalized and realized it on another scale while living abroad and especially in a multicultural environment. The ability to understand different conventions and everyday social encounters as well the correct interpretation of them is part of broadmindedness, describing a more practical facet of the dimension. An interesting finding concerning broadmindedness and multiculturalism was that the *mere presence* of numerous different cultures led to more broadminded thinking. In a multicultural environment the awareness and understanding of different meanings of behaviors in everyday social encounters is a prerequisite on the way to understanding other cultures. Broadmindedness is also very closely connected to other main dimensions found in the texts, and I will explain next the dimension which is closest, namely flexibility.

8.2.2 FLEXIBILITY

“In Finland at the workplace I used to greet ten people in the same room all at the same time just saying ‘hello’ or ‘good morning’. Here I go and shake hands with each one of those ten and say individually ‘hello, hello, hello’, and the same thing in the afternoon and ‘bye, bye, bye’ and ‘see you tomorrow’, I mean, that is kind of, I am now used to it, but it was so weird in the beginning, because if I did not shake hands, colleagues took offence and I got a bit scared a few times wondering what have I done, but it was simply because I did not greet them properly in the morning.”

Man, 7 years abroad

Flexibility refers to the ability to learn from experiences and to switch one's behavior to that required by the situation. Flexibility was another concept which constantly appeared in the interviews. It was often in close connection to the dimension broadmindedness, and especially to tolerance and

perspective. The usual pattern was to describe how the diversity of nationalities around one leads to tolerance, new perspectives, and flexibility. However, flexibility was connected to several different topics on differing levels. The major idea of flexibility found in the texts referred to flexible *behaviour learned* through exposure to different ways of living and working, and through one's own experiences; the ability to switch one's behaviour from one situation to another. Flexibility is an ability to *cope*. It describes the behavioral part of adaptation, but it also has a connection to the affective part in the subcategory tolerance of ambiguity. I will next describe flexibility and its basic subcategories: tolerance of ambiguity, discretion, and flexible behaviour. In each of these categories less and more internalized flexibility was distinguishable: while some described flexibility in a positive and competent manner, others were more hesitant in their descriptions, sometimes even reluctant. Hence, in each category under flexibility one could find dimensionality from the hesitant or reluctant to the internalized pole, whereas the categories themselves are equal in the flexibility dimension.

8.2.2.1 Tolerance of ambiguity

The tolerance of ambiguity is the ability to cope with uncertainty in new environments and in ambiguous situations. It refers to the self-regulation ability in various settings. It was brought up widely in the interviews, and its importance was accentuated. It was also quite frequently mentioned together with the word patience. As things did not always go the way one was used to back home, the interviewees had learned to live occasionally in ambiguous situations and to cope in them.

“These situations are countless, where you in a way, in a Finnish way of thinking would have thought this issue is crystal clear and this is how we proceed, and we were well in tune with things. And then it does not go the way we expected. This is one of the remarkable features that one has learned to accept, you just have to act according to the situation and accept the uncertainty.”

Man, 5 years abroad

“I have learned that I can cope with many kinds of people coming from many different cultures, but you have to be flexible. ... I have noticed one has to be like...prepared for all kinds of changes, all kinds of things, both work and daily life, of course, in a new culture, it does not always go...you cannot...which is interesting also, on the other hand.”

Man, 2 years abroad

Tolerance of ambiguity was seen in a positive light in general, but there were also references to the fact that certain circumstances demanded flexibility due to the uncertain nature of a situation, which was felt to be frustrating at times. I described this category as “forced flexibility”.

“It’s incredible how difficult it has been to take care of daily life here, and the honesty here, you cannot trust at all what these people say here. Take for example a plumber, he comes when he wants to come. For example we were supposed to have a renovation, starting at 9 on Monday morning, and I asked and asked again that will he certainly be here at 9 on Monday. Yes, yes. He came Tuesday at 12, no, excuse me, Wednesday at 12, fortunately I happened to be here, because all the household duties are on me.”

Woman, 3 years abroad

“Kind of tolerance, general tolerance, so that you must be more flexible, you cannot, you cannot expect that things run smoothly here. It’s kind of nerve-wracking in a way. I am at work a kind of pretty precise person, and I have been in the service sector myself, so I expect a certain kind of service, nothing impossible but that people would take responsibility for what they do. It has been really difficult, nerve-wracking for myself when things do not run smoothly.”

Woman, 6 years abroad

“When you learn to take it as a certainty that nothing is certain, meaning, that when you know that the probable does not probably happen, that’s when you are there, your expectations are on a right level, that’s when you will not get any more big surprises.”

Man, 3 years abroad

8.2.2.2 Discretion

Discretion refers to the respondents’ own behaviour, how they are more careful in ambiguous situations and try to consider the situation before acting. Discretion as a subcategory in flexibility is something which is rarely referred to in quantitative studies. Yet it is clearly part of adaptation, and was described even by those who had lived for years abroad.

“Maybe you just do not form your opinion as easily as before. You kind of look and listen first more carefully. ... There are so many different kinds of people and things, and even though everyone has their own opinions, you do not need to declare yours directly, and you do not have to change your opinion even if you do not say it aloud immediately. One has learned to live and look first and see that there may be a different view as well.”

Woman, 15 years abroad

Discretion refers to the sensitivity learned through experience. Such expressions as “cautiousness” and “one has to be humble” were mentioned in this category. At the same time as one is conscious of flexibility in the environment, it is not always clear where the limit is. So it may be safer to act more discreetly in order to avoid conflicts. This pole describes more hesitant flexibility.

“When in Finland you know, for example, that you have these kinds of rights and these obligations, and if I act according to them everything goes fine, and I can also require the same behaviour from the others. Here it is more uncertain, so that maybe I have been mistaken, maybe you can drive in the roundabout in the opposite direction. At least you do not dare to start brawling, maybe you are wrong yourself, so yes, I am more docile here than in Finland.”

Man, 5 years abroad

8.2.2.3 Flexible behaviour

The components describing most clearly flexible behaviour consist of actions that follow thinking. This category includes quotes explaining how one has adapted one's behavior to the mode the situation requires. These categories include quotes describing how people have learned to change their behaviour in the course of action in general (adapting one's behavior to the situation), adapting one's own behavior to the different concept of time, and also one's communication style (adapting one's speech and forms of expressions to the situation). In daily life general behavioural changes most commonly concern small gestures one has learned in order to act smoothly in a new environment.

“When we go to the sports centre with our friends, first we give air kisses and then we play and then we kiss, and then we go home, yet before that a few air kisses, so yes in the beginning...it took a while before I got used to it, to get such hairy kisses, sweaty hairy old men,

but now it's okay, you get used to it, ...I did not use to kiss at hobbies, but now I have got practice of it."

Man, 3 years abroad

Some respondents described how they behaved as expected, but were nevertheless hesitant why this particular behaviour was required.

About separation of waste: "It feels kind of weird that you put metal and plastic into a blue plastic bag, so do they really separate them at all or is it just for fun, I mean what is done afterwards? It is a bit sort of, I do put them, but then I kind of think that this is useless, do they actually sort them later."

Woman, 18 months abroad

A flexible concept of time was often mentioned in this category. Interviewees explained that in Brussels you have to adapt to a different kind of flexibility concerning agreed schedules. This was regarded as partly the consequence of so many cultures with different habits living and working together, and also simply because of habitat density: there are so many people everywhere that you may get caught in traffic or simply in a queue in a supermarket and be late due to that. This precedes realizing the need for flexibility required in a situation, as well as seeing cultural differences behind the concept of time (broadmindedness).

"Punctuality is more flexible here. It is not the "mañana" phenomenon like in Spain, but we have at the workplace this positive way of getting things done – I mean the solution needs to be reached, but if the deadline is not reached, then we think when could be the next deadline, and how to reach it. I was used to it in Finland that a deadline is not flexible, and when I came here I was first stressing needlessly as I could not reach the deadline, thinking I should have done something more or better. Well, the truth is, things can be delayed due to reasons beyond your own control, and here the way of taking things is realistic, and I would say solution-focused".

Man, 2 years abroad

"This punctuality here can be defined so that 15 minutes late is not late, it is acceptable, even if you are on your way to see the director, you can always say you got caught in traffic, which is often really the case here, if you get caught in some bottleneck, it takes time, it does

not bother anyone. It's okay, it happens...so, the attitude towards time and the concept of time is much more relaxed here, people are not so precise, that meeting was supposed to start five seconds ago, which, then again brings stiffness, I mean it's good in a way that Finns are straightforward, getting to the point, but here it's this 'laissez faire' attitude in a sense that things get done even if the meeting starts 15 minutes later, the issues are dealt with anyway in a proper manner, it's just the concept of time that is more liberal."

Man, 12 years abroad

For some individuals it was more difficult to cope with a different concept of time. These quotes come close to the category tolerance of ambiguity, especially when uncertainty and frustration was expressed.

"What irritates me most here, to be frank, is that people are not punctual, and if something is agreed, it is not here...in short, if something is agreed here, it does not mean at all the same as it stands for in Finland. Over and over one can for example agree on a deadline, but here it only means that it's just another date after which you start asking about the issue."

Woman, 2 years abroad

An important feature frequently taken up by the respondents was the realization and understanding of diverse ways in communication styles and learning to behave accordingly. Especially in these quotes, which describe behavioural change, respondents often reviewed the process of learning. While awareness refers to the 'perspective' and 'diverse ways' attributes of broadmindedness, the actual course of an action, the communication act in itself is part of flexibility, involving the ability to change one's own behaviour in order to act successfully.

"I usually write brief, blunt e-mails, but now I have needed to start them in a more poetic way, otherwise they think I am angry at them"(How did you realize this?) – "They came to ask me what's wrong, but there was nothing wrong...they do know now that I cannot write poetry in my e-mails in a special way, but I was more straightforward before."

Man, 3 years abroad

The learning process was frequently brought up in communication situations. Multiculturalism was also brought up both as a facilitating factor as well as a reason for perplexity. On the one hand, with many different cultures communicating together one's own style was sometimes felt to be "just another piece in a patchwork quilt". On the other hand, seeing many different nationalities working (and living) together one learns how to act according to the situation at hand.

"There is so much more small talk here. And with colleagues, because I am in contact with persons from different delegations from several member states, I mean there is talk and talk before we get to the point, and I kind of got confused, but I have learned. It's different in many countries, but in Finland, in Finland you get straight to the point, and Finns know that you are not impolite, they do not regard you as impolite, when you do that, but here you cannot do that because the others feel, I mean they can even be insulted, so I have needed to adjust my behaviour."

Woman, 6 years abroad

On the other hand, the diversity of cultures and their different communication styles was felt to cause some problems since the message could not always be understood due to different styles and ways of expressing oneself. A practical way of dealing with this, often mentioned in the interviews, was to double check whether one has understood the issue in the same way as others.

"In cooperation, at times we have these joint tasks with different nationalities, so this, how do you do it, or what you agree upon one doing and another doing, it is not always that clear...I have worked together with a Greek and an Italian and it is a bit more difficult so that I have to confirm I have understood, and what we have in fact agreed and who does which part."

Woman, 8 years abroad

Sometimes flexible behaviour in communication situations was felt to be more difficult and even pretended.

"I think that locals get along with their bosses better, since they do not say directly what the problem is, but instead they hedge around the problem and then carefully hint that there might be something, and later see when the time is right, maybe return to the problem. It's too

complicated for me, and in fact I have understood it is too long a road for many Finns; one should get to the point more quickly and call a spade a spade. It is not so easy here, in fact, it is one of the most difficult things here in order to adapt: what troubles me is that you have to think carefully how, to whom and when you should bring a subject up.

Man, 7 years abroad

“I am a Finn, and Finns are sincere, I mean I want to say things sincerely, and then sometimes I start by saying, one could say I blurt out my opinion and then I realize I forgot these formalities, even though I never say very formal ...I mean really syrupy compliments as I call them, I just say what is needed, and kind of a necessary litany of some compliments, but sometimes I forget that blarney in the beginning, I mean I think it’s blarney, and then I realize that now I have said the comments directly, said sincerely what I think, and then I apologize by saying excuse me, I am a Finn, and we are sincere I mean we have this way I mean we get straight to the point, I kind of try to soothe it afterwards.”

Woman, 2 years abroad

8.2.2.4 Flexibility in a nutshell

Flexibility refers to 1) tolerance of ambiguity, 2) discretion in new and unknown situations and, 3) adapting one’s own behaviour to varying situations. Learning to adapt one’s own communication to situations was one of the most visible issues in flexible behaviour. The polarization was lucidly present in this dimension, creating a continuum from expressions of reluctant, uncertain or cautious flexibility to internalized and competent flexibility inside each category.

All in all, flexibility is closely connected to broader perspective and tolerance, and seems to be a crucial building block on the way to adaptation in a multicultural environment. It was also clearly something that the respondents had *acquired* due to living abroad and in particular due to living in a multicultural environment. Flexibility in the interviews referred mostly to learning through seeing and experiencing, and changing to adapt to new situations.

Flexibility has a direct connection to the concept of *coping*. The different aspects of flexibility found in the texts refer to the ability to cope successfully in various settings. Here I do not refer to traditional theories of coping strategies, such as those of Folkman and Lazarus (1985), or Cross (1995). Instead, the concept is retrievable from the texts and entails a variety of

coping abilities referring to flexible communication competencies, assessment of the situation and the ability to behave accordingly. Coping was also present in the next dimension found in the texts, namely extroversion.

8.2.3 EXTROVERSION

“Internationality teaches you that...you have to be able to get along with people...it is that sort of, I think important matter when you move abroad, you cannot, you cannot be an introvert, you have to be an extrovert, or you will miss your home country enormously and...I have seen these examples...you start feeling bad pretty quickly...there abroad...even if you get on fine financially, if you do not get along otherwise. The social network changes completely, really, friends, relatives stay far back, and of course you can call them, but it's different. You have to create a network here, we have been lucky or maybe we are that kind of people, we got a circle of friends right at the beginning.”

Man, 15 years abroad

The third dimension extroversion denotes socially active behaviour: building new social networks and actively taking an initiative as well as managing one's daily affairs. It describes the interviewee's accentuation that one has to be an extrovert in order to succeed both in social life and in everyday social encounters. I will describe the two subcategories of extroversion that give a slightly different view to being an extrovert. The first one describes the quotes accentuating the conscious effort to act in an extrovert manner. In this category it was often mentioned that one has to dare to go out and make friends, one has to learn to talk more and pay attention to one's behaviour, and also learn to get along with different kinds of people in order to make social relationships work. In these quotes it was visible that even individuals who feel they are naturally introverts, realized that a certain amount of extrovert behaviour is required in a foreign milieu. The second category refers to a smoother progression, one ability leading to another. In this category extrovert behaviour was regarded as effortless and natural, albeit its significance was well recognized. The basic idea found in all the texts was that extrovert behaviour is needed, since social circles have to be built from the beginning, and active behaviour is needed to deal with affairs in daily life.

8.2.3.1 *Striving extrovert*

Judging from the quotes, not all respondents felt they were initially extrovert by nature. Respondents accentuated in this category the need to *dare*: to

Speak, to go out and make things happen, to get to know other people. It is worthwhile mentioning here that even those individuals who felt they had to make an effort to be extrovert, still regarded it as a positive change, even though it was sometimes tiring.

“You have to be more active here than in Finland, say hello and kind of be extrovert. In Finland one could kind of (laughs) sulk, you did not need to, everybody knew you anyway and you did not need to bother, maybe here you have to pay attention to first impression ...”

Man, 2 years abroad

“With other nationalities you have to pay attention, that now I am quiet, I have to say something ... it’s always a source of bafflement in a new job, when you go out and eat with your workmates, and there are many of us, and I stay quiet, they always ask what’s wrong. I say I’m a Finn, Finns are quiet, I say it as a joke, it’s kind of ice breaker, it lifts the tension, and then I waffle something on top of it...it is always happening.”

Man, 7 years abroad

“Well, I mean you have to talk more...I mean, I am not very talkative by nature...and then for example at the doctor’s appointment you just have to talk! (laughs) I mean you really have to talk a lot, he does not ask a lot of questions or something like that, I mean it’s the French language, it’s characteristic to the language that you produce it on a larger scale, and you talk also about the weather and ... you really have to pay attention to it.”

Woman, 6 years abroad

There were also quotes which describe how it is essential to consciously think and act in ways that ease communication and help make acquaintances. These comments included descriptions of paying attention to one’s behaviour and ways of communication in order to succeed in building one’s social networks. In particular in these quotes flexible behaviour was seen alongside of extrovert behaviour.

“I have to do it myself, in every country where we have been, I have to build a life for myself, I have to, in order to feel at home, I have to build the social network and find friends and be kind of extremely active, in order to get hold of your life... in a way, I have consciously

changed into a more friendly person than before, so that I can adapt to these varying working and living conditions, and to these people around. I have, kind of, with a friendly attitude tried to make room for ...favourable acquaintances."

Woman, 9 years abroad

"I think it's up to you, whether you try to take the initiative, or at least appear to be kind of reachable, it makes it a lot easier to get to know people. If you walk with your eyes closed and just walk in and out of your own door, you will not make any friends."

Woman, 9 years abroad

8.2.3.2 Natural extrovert

The second subcategory in the extroversion dimension consists of quotations describing how issues are linked together, one ability or experience leading rather effortlessly to another. In these cases some respondents considered that improvement in language abilities enabled them to become more socially active and make friends, which also led to a broader perspective and tolerance. On the other hand, some said they have always been quite extrovert.

"Your language ability improves, so you get the courage to make contacts and communicate with others and then you realize the world is not limited to your home town or your own language, you can be in contact with other people around Europe, and you can get a lot out of it even if you do not see everybody all the time. Your own circles broaden."

Man, 5 years abroad

"I know how to become acquainted with other cultures. For example at (language) school I talk to Maroccans, I know three words in Arabic and they were impressed, now they always come to talk to me. It's just that since you have been in a similar situation yourself, you know it does not take much to feel better in a foreign culture. I mean I am myself in a foreign culture, but then again Brussels is easy because there are so many different cultures here. Then again, you yourself do not stand out as a foreigner, if you want to stand out, you have to use other means."

Woman, 12 years abroad

“When I came here, I had a Belgian boss, and he asked me if I could stay longer since he had noticed ‘you have this incredible ability to get along with so many kinds of people’. – And the same thing happened with my other boss, we have these formative discussions twice a year and he said that he wonders how I do it, I said I do not know (laughs), it is just innate.”

Woman, 3 years abroad

In the extroversion dimension the multicultural nature of the Brussels environment came up in quotations as a facilitating factor. Those who did not speak the language of the country well could nevertheless make acquaintances with several other nationalities, since the foreign community – and the language ability of locals in certain workplaces – enabled communication and the building of social networks in English. Being extrovert was actually connected in many occasions to feelings about one’s own language ability and which language was needed at work or in one’s daily life. Some felt their inability to speak fluent French made it more difficult for them to be extrovert, while others felt they could build good and satisfactory networks with English speaking people, and some with only Finns.

8.2.3.3 Extroversion in a nutshell

The extroversion dimension in this study consists of respondents’ accentuation of how one has to go out, take the initiative, and take active steps in order to succeed in building social networks as well as in everyday social encounters. Communication skills in general were brought up in this dimension. Language ability was closely connected to this issue, where and how one can be extrovert. Yet another main point in this dimension was that while others described themselves as extrovert by nature, quite a few reported how they had made a conscious effort to *become* more extrovert. Extroversion denotes *active behavior* and describes the ability to *cope* successfully in intercultural communication situations in order to build social relationships and manage one’s daily life. This leads to another noteworthy point, the connection of extroversion dimension with other dimensions. Being extrovert facilitates seeing different points of views, broadening one’s mind, learning to be flexible, and quite logically, increases a feeling of self-efficacy.

8.2.4 SELF-EFFICACY

“You become more courageous, and I mean this is such an incredible life experience to live abroad, even though it is not easy, all these difficulties abroad and no mother or siblings by your side. That really

teaches a lot about yourself, I mean I have become quite...quite sure of myself, I really don't know what should happen in this world anymore where I could not cope. The belief that you can manage...it has taught me, living abroad and all these things that have happened."

Woman, 8 years abroad

The fourth dimension, self-efficacy, was present in the interviews most of the time with descriptions how it has *increased* while living abroad. Learning to cope in a foreign milieu without the help of family and friends who stayed back home, having the courage to get things done and make new relationships, proving to oneself one can manage, overcoming difficulties and learning to reassert oneself all describe mastery experiences that have made the respondents become more self-confident and also able to control feelings of distress. What is in particular interesting is that self-efficacy was seen as a *result* of the experiences, described as "I have become..." or "self-efficacy has grown". The theme "to victory through difficulties" was not uncommon in this dimension. I will next describe self-efficacy found in the texts with two subcategories: self-confidence and assertiveness.

8.2.4.1 Self-confidence

The respondents described various situations, and some explained it as a long process to learn how to believe in oneself and in one's abilities to cope abroad. The usual pattern was to bring up the fact that as relatives and friends are back in Finland, one has to learn how to manage independently, individually or as family. This teaches one to know one's own abilities, including both weaknesses and strengths. Self-awareness increases with self-efficacy. Expressions like "exceeding oneself" and finding one's weaknesses and strengths were often present in these descriptions. In minimal situations it was a question of learning to manage one's daily life, whereas others described how it led them to broaden their social networks through gaining courage to speak and make friends.

"Self-confidence has grown, so that somehow I feel I can cope in different situations even if they may seem difficult, while you are in it, it's kind of an experience of surviving,...kind of what I have learned, ...maybe when you are abroad you are a bit detached from your own circles, you learn to know yourself better...when you are isolated from your normal environment you kind of become more confident about yourself, and you somehow become more sure of yourself, you know who you are."

Woman, 2 years abroad

“I am very brisk, and I have become much more extrovert, sometimes even to such extent that a salesperson in Finland really got scared (laughs) that ‘that person is talking to me’. I mean there is a clear difference, I have become more courageous, so that if I need to take care of affairs or need to do something, I am no longer timid about it, as it has been a must here to take the most of myself, so that has made my self-confidence and courage grow.”

Woman, 2 years abroad

“So many different situations I have learned to handle, I mean I have been boiled in many soups – and it has taught me independence so much, I have needed to find the resources where you would not expect them directly, I mean in Finland you have family and friends, had you stayed there you would not need to...spread your nets, what you have needed to grow here, so that now I feel I can find help here, I know where to call, and I have the courage to call and ask for help, and somehow I feel I have found my place here and I am pretty proud that I have been able to show to myself that I can cope here, I can live here, my life is here, and I do not feel I need to give up on something, I can get it here what I need and even more.”

Woman, 11 years abroad

The problems that the respondents had faced had made them believe in their own abilities and taught them to control their stress in unfamiliar situations, connecting self-efficacy with tolerance of ambiguity.

“I have learned to cope in many kinds of situations, I no longer get scared of anything unexpected, except in traffic (laughing). I guess that’s mostly what I have learned, in many countries and so on, you can nowadays...I guess that’s it, you do not get surprised in new situations, and you do not get scared, you are not afraid to get into new and unknown situations.”

Man, 7 years abroad

8.2.4.2 Assertiveness

Through the experiences the respondents described how they have become assertive, fending for themselves and in general sure of themselves.

“Like that saying: ‘If you do not want to be walked over why on earth do you lie on the floor’. In a way the elbowing here, you really have to do it here, because you have to make a space for yourself or you will be walked all over. On the other hand, it reflects on moral values, as well. In Finland one is kind of meticulous about some formalities, here it’s more like if you manage to grab something it’s good because anyway, somebody will try to get something from you, so in a way, I do not know if it’s good or bad. But it has increased my self-confidence and the concept that you really have to stand up and assert yourself, that has become stronger here.”

Man, 5 years abroad

8.2.4.3 Self-efficacy in a nutshell

Self-efficacy in the interviews describes a belief in one’s own abilities, alike defined by Bandura (1977). It was in general experienced and presented in the stories as something that has grown due to the experiences abroad. The respondents often used the word courage to describe these issues. Another way to explain the growth of self-efficacy was through explaining the process of learning to cope in new situations and how it has affected them. The ability to control stress in unfamiliar situations was also described as having grown, which again increased self-efficacy.

An interesting finding about self-efficacy was also that even though most of the time it was connected to other dimensions, some individuals described it as separate from them. There were some interviewees who regarded the growth of self-efficacy as the main benefit during their staying abroad, even though they had not managed to cope and adapt otherwise. On the other hand, to others increased self-efficacy had helped them to act in a more extrovert manner and this had led to a more socially active life, increased broadmindedness and more flexible behaviour.

Self-efficacy, the fourth dimension of the five found in this study could be distinguished from the texts as clearly as the first three dimensions, but was not brought up as often as them. 21 of 52 persons (40.4%) took the issue up. Another difference was that unlike broadmindedness, flexibility, and extroversion, descriptions of self-efficacy did not refer to the multicultural environment as a triggering cause. This is understandable, since the concept of self-efficacy is more a personal state of mind, and refers to belief in one’s own capabilities.

There is still one more dimension to be discussed: adventurousness. This dimension is slightly different from the former in its appearance, as will be explained next.

8.2.5 ADVENTUROUSNESS

“Maybe one reason why I stay here is that living in Finland, once you have lived abroad and survived, many things seem so pale there ... I have given it a lot of thought. Why is it that even though living here is in a way difficult and challenging, why do you nevertheless enjoy it so much? I think it is due to the feeling that you kind of live more deeply here, life is more real here, but I say this is purely based on feelings, I do not really know where it comes from ... but in a way life is an adventure while you are here, it is not in the same way monotonous as it so easily is in Finland, or it becomes, of course it does not have to be though, it’s up to you.”

Man, 5 years abroad

The fifth dimension of adaptation, adventurousness, describes how living abroad makes life feel exciting and interesting. Such expressions as an additional attraction to life, a boost to life, a challenge and the word adventure were found in the quotes. Respondents also explained here how they were curious, restless, and open to seeing and learning new things.

This dimension was less present in the texts in general than the four dimensions described earlier. Yet there was a sufficient number of respondents (12 persons, 23%) who brought up this topic as a clear issue which had affected their adaptation. The difficulties and unexpected events in daily life were not seen as reasons not to adapt but were considered a challenge and brought interest to life. I did not include in this dimension comments about the “honeymoon” stage, only the descriptions which clearly demonstrated this attitude in the long run.

“I would like to say this has been an adventure – of course there is more normal daily life nowadays, but it is still a bit of an adventure.”

Man, 14 years abroad

“To find something interesting and inspiring all the time, and in a way... this has been, still this feels, I would say, like an adventure, even though Belgium is now my home country, still I am in a certain way abroad, it has not lost its charm of novelty, still I stop and look around and I think: I live in Belgium.”

Man, 5 years abroad

“My family is far away and I am homesick all the time, but I have been thinking that life abroad is more like a kind of adventure, and I

mean every day, because you bump into these other fools (laughs) from different parts of Europe, meaning it is more challenging since you have to navigate in these international circles. Maybe that's what's giving me kicks."

Woman, 12 years abroad

Adventure descriptions were often connected to broadmindedness. Willingness to see and learn, and take new situations as positive challenges instead of giving up when there are difficulties, were described in these quotes.

"This is a big adventure, if you lose your nerves about every detail that does not go right you can go pack your bags and leave right away. I left with the attitude that this is a big adventure, you face the things as they come, in a way, even though of course I mainly came for work."

Man, 4 years abroad

"What I like most about living abroad is that you observe all the time. Even though you live your normal life and daily life, it is somehow different, it does not become...in Finland everything is so predictable, so that you almost know what the other one is going to say to you next; that does not happen here, and this is what gives it an additional attraction in life and to live abroad, of course broadens your mind, as you see how people live in different countries and so on,...I mean, I have always loved to travel and move to different places."

Woman, 10 years abroad

8.2.5.1 Adventurousness in a nutshell

The key words in adventurousness are challenge, curiosity and openness to change. Life is seen as an adventure, where moving abroad has brought interesting challenges and the possibility to see and experience new things. This was something that some expatriates explained and pondered, while others did not. 12 persons out of 52 (23%) mentioned adventurousness. From the texts one could say that some people simply have it and others do not.

Adventurousness is the fifth and last of the dimensions describing adaptation to a multicultural environment. This dimension, like the others, with the exception of self-efficacy, was connected to Brussels multiculturalism. A person with an adventurous mind has a good opportunity to satisfy his/her curiosity about different people and their cultures and habits in a place where such a number of different nationalities reside together. This

was mentioned in the adventure quotes on several occasions, even though not all respondents referred to it when talking about adventure.

8.3 SUMMARY: DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

The five dimensions of adaptation that I found from the interviews illustrate the characteristics and competencies that the respondents described as having either gained during their stay abroad or the qualities they already possessed before. Either way, they are the building blocks of successful adaptation to a multicultural environment. The three dimensions broadmindedness, flexibility and extroversion are the central characteristics. Self-efficacy is closely connected to this whole by many respondents and adventurousness is a facilitating quality even though it is not a prerequisite.

Broadmindedness portrays tolerance, the willingness to be open to other ways of life, different conventions and general variety in life, and further, the ability to see life from others' point of view. It could be found in every interview, but the scale was vast. As some respondents scarcely mentioned tolerance (usually referring to the multicultural environment), others discussed at length the understanding and new insights they had learned to see. Flexibility describes both the ability to switch one's behaviour according to the situation and self-regulation in ambiguous situations, ranging on a continuum from reluctant to pervasive and competent flexibility. Again, the dimension was retrievable from all interviews, but with clear differences on a continuum. Extroversion denotes success in building social networks and coping in everyday social encounters, either by learning socially active behaviour or having a natural ability. The extroversion dimension could be retrieved from each interview, but while it was a natural way to behave for some, others needed a conscious effort to act at least to some extent in an extrovert manner in a foreign environment. Self-efficacy, less present but an important factor to some, describes the growth of self-efficacy that helps in coping with daily life and in different life domains. This dimension was present in 21 (40.4%) interviews, the rest not mentioning the subject. Adventurousness was the least present of all dimensions, but for those who described it (12 persons, 23%), it was clearly an important factor which affected adaptation.

Two important issues, language ability and communication competence are part of many of these dimensions. Language ability came out in texts especially in connection with extrovert behaviour, but in general, language ability also facilitates in understanding everyday social encounters, and through this it was also linked to broadmindedness and flexibility. Self-efficacy had also increased with some as linguistic ability had grown and provided opportunities for successful communication. Communication

competence was seen to be a particular part of extrovert behaviour, helping to build social relationships, and flexibility, where it was an essential part of successful flexible behaviour. Competent communication also creates opportunities to learn different ways of seeing the world from other nationalities, which affects broadmindedness, although it was not directly included in it.

The five dimensions are closely connected to each other. Broadmindedness helps one to become more flexible and facilitates the building of social relationships with persons from other nationalities. Extrovert behaviour facilitates the building of new relationships, which then broadens one's mind further and helps in learning flexible behaviour. Successful flexible behaviour is an asset in building new relationships and managing daily life in general. The growth of self-efficacy aids in coping with daily life in general, and also gives one courage to act in an extrovert manner and through this build social relationships. Adventurousness as a quality encourages one to find out about things and get to know people, which again has a positive effect on adaptation. For an illustration of the five dimensions of adaptation to a multicultural environment, see Figure 5.

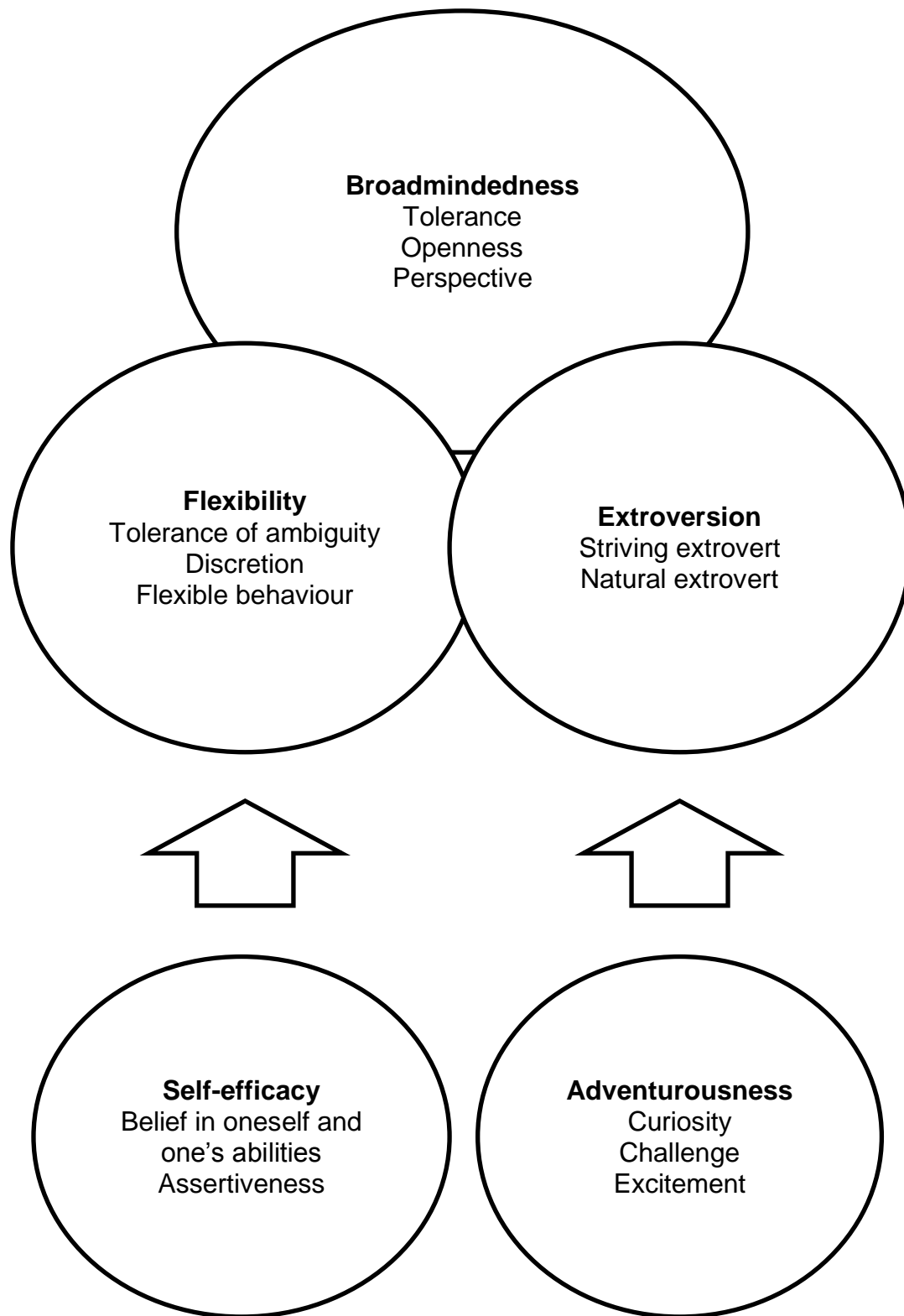


Figure 5 Dimensions of adaptation to a multicultural environment

8.4 TYPES OF ADAPTATION

As dimensions were formed based on similarities and differences between the codes, the types describe major similarities and differences between the participants. Since I wanted to find the major unifying and separating factors from the texts themselves, I did not apply factors from current theories of adaptation when forming the types. In other words, I did not want to fit the data into a theory, but rather I wanted to find a model from the texts themselves. In practice this meant reading the interviews over and over again. As I read the texts, I started placing the interviews into different groups, based on several possible combinations. This phase of the study was done manually with cardboard tables and stickers. As I compared the texts, I could find several unifying and even more numerous separating factors, but eventually all interviews could be categorized under two main continuums that I call axes: motivation and competencies. After finding the major axes, I could see that the model works with this data, and each interview could be placed in one of the types and each type was a coherent group. The first axis describes the competencies and qualities of fitting in and adapting. In the competencies such factors were found as successful communication competence, situation assessment, language ability, and the ability to form satisfying social networks. The dimensions' qualities like tolerance of ambiguity, the ability to switch behaviour according to the situation, and perspective taking were all included in this whole. All these competencies and qualities formed the entities in interviews that were compared with each other. The second axis describes the positive motivation toward change in order to be able to adapt. The motivation to change was retrievable especially from the codes describing broadmindedness and flexibility, but the overall nature of each interview was the final determining source. The four types are: 1) ideally adapted (18 persons), 2) positively adapting (18 persons), 3) ambiguously adapting (13 persons), and 4) not adapted (3 persons).

8.4.1 IDEALLY ADAPTED

The ideally adapted individuals possessed both the qualities and competencies needed for adaptation as well as a positive motivation toward change. All the respondents that belonged to this type could without hesitation be described as broadminded, flexible and extrovert. In broadmindedness the codes describing the perspective pole were predominant, and in flexibility competent flexible behavior was prevalent. Most of the participants who mentioned adventure were in this group. Some in this group described their self-efficacy as having increased while others did not bring the subject up. All individuals in this group were coping successfully in different situations abroad and described a change which was consistently regarded as positive. In

other words, they possessed both the motivation and the qualities and competencies needed for successful adaptation and had *fitted in*. Almost all these people had an international circle of friends, and they also had some Belgian acquaintances or friends. Over half of the ideally adapted group spoke fluent French, and some were fluent in Flemish. There was one person in this type who spoke neither French nor Flemish. This individual nevertheless had friends among other nationalities as well as Belgians. Judging from the interviews, the language ability of the country *was* a facilitating factor, but at least in a multicultural environment like Brussels there are individuals who adapt ideally even without it. Another common feature amongst these people was that all of them had been in Belgium for at least two years (except for one, who had nevertheless lived abroad for several years), and quite a few had spent over five years abroad altogether. To sum up: overall competence and fluency in new situations as well as success in social relationships and communication competence were ubiquitous in this group. All ideally adapted individuals had a positive motivation toward change as well and had adapted accordingly.

8.4.2 POSITIVELY ADAPTING

As the label of the group indicates, these individuals had a positive motivation toward change and adaptation. They had many competencies that are needed in order to adapt, but unlike the ideally adapted, they still lacked and aimed to gain some factors. The positively adapting group was composed of three subcategories based on the main factor hindering smooth adaptation: lack of language knowledge, difficulties with coping, and long working hours. In the first subcategory the lack of language ability and the descriptions how it made daily life more difficult was described, posing difficulties in everyday social encounters and understanding the life around them. For some it posed difficulties in building social networks outside the Finnish community. In fact, almost half of those who said they mainly socialized with other Finns belonged to this type. However, most of them were positive about learning to speak either French or Flemish in the future, and regarded this as a state of affairs that would change in the future. The second subcategory was composed of individuals who spoke either French or Flemish fluently, but despite this expressed their coping, although positive, in a hesitant manner. They had problems with the situation assessment but clearly possessed the willingness for and a positive attitude toward change. Furthermore, the third subgroup mentioned that their work demanded so much time that their social life had not developed, and they therefore felt somewhat detached from the larger community at the moment. Some of them had fluent knowledge of either French or Flemish, while others reported that the lack of language knowledge was an additional difficulty. Yet all positively adapting individuals regarded

their life in a positive light and felt they had changed due to living abroad, becoming more broadminded, flexible and extrovert.

On average, the individuals in this group had been in Belgium less than the ideally adapted group. Most of them had spent some time abroad before coming to Belgium. The majority in this type had been abroad for one to five years. All in all, there was a general impression of positive motivation and fairly successful coping, and the ability to fit into a new environment in time, but some missing factors currently existed.

8.4.3 AMBIGUOUSLY ADAPTING

This type of adaptation characterizes persons who had many competencies needed for adaptation, but their motivation to change was ambiguous. The first feature describing ambiguous motivation was linked to the broadmindedness dimension. The actual ability to view different perspectives was less present than with the ideally adapted or positively adapting groups, and the willingness to understand the variety in life could be called hesitant, with some even being disinclined. The second feature which reflected ambiguous motivation was connected to flexibility. Even though ambiguously adapting individuals also talked about the positive sides of flexibility, uncertainty was expressed more often than in the two categories discussed above. The tolerance of ambiguity was mentioned, but with references to frustration and uneasiness concerning uncertainty in daily affairs or work issues. Flexible behaviour was as well less visible in these interviews, describing more frequently hesitation and feelings of constraint. The major difference compared to the two former categories was that these individuals clearly felt it required more effort to cope with uncertainty than the positively adapting and ideally adapted persons. Despite the competencies they possessed, their motivation to change was more ambiguous, even reluctant in some cases. Most of these people also had satisfying social networks, some with Finns and others with different nationalities. Some of these individuals mentioned their increased self-efficacy. An interesting feature in this group was that the majority spoke fluent French. But, there were also individuals who straightforwardly connected their language inability with their feelings of uncertainty and hesitant motivation.

Individuals belonging to this type had also been in Belgium from one to five years, like the positively adapting group. Most of them had also lived abroad before, but not all. It was the general description of the difficulties and the motivation towards overcome these difficulties that distinguished these otherwise well adapted individuals from the two prior described types. To characterize this group in short, they had ambiguous descriptions and feelings toward change, being well adapted in many ways but hesitant in others, this bringing an element of uncertainty into their lives.

8.4.4 NOT ADAPTED

The individuals in this group described their inability to adapt as the result of lack of competencies and motivation. This minor group is called 'not adapted' due to these individuals' own feelings of not being able or not being willing to adapt, as well as the researcher's interpretation. Practically all the criteria of adaptation were missing in these interviews, and there were also numerous quotes describing failure in understanding and coping in general. The first one to be mentioned was the attempt to learn French, a language they had all tried to learn but had failed. The failure in learning in itself was felt to be discouraging and a disappointment, but it also made life more difficult and impeded communication and led to misunderstandings both in communication and in the interpretation of everyday social encounters. One interviewee described this process as a 'vicious circle', but the rest simply described failure, repeated negative experiences, and a negative attitude towards daily life and its difficulties. The inability to understand courses of action around them was constantly brought up by these interviewees. All these individuals highlighted the differences in culture and how this impeded them from coping and succeeding in both communication and understanding the life around them. However, some of the not adapted group mentioned they had become more broadminded so that they understood other foreigners and their difficulties better now. Flexibility was negatively present in these narrations, and most of them said they had not been able to make any friends. What was remarkable is that despite these difficulties some of these people felt their self-efficacy had increased a great deal. The way they had nevertheless managed to cope somehow had made them feel stronger and given them mastery experiences.

Regarding the time spent abroad, most of these individuals had barely been in Belgium for a year, and none had been abroad altogether more than three years. Whether this was the reason or the result, these respondents all mentioned the impermanence of their stay. As they knew they were only staying for a certain time, they explained they had little interest in adapting. In other words, the lack of motivation to adapt was obvious.

8.5 SUMMARY OF TYPES OF ADAPTATION

The two major axes distinguished four types of adaptation. On the first axis, describing competencies, the overall competence to adapt was easily distinguishable in the ideally adapted group. The next two types, positively adapting and ambiguously adapting were still learning the competencies and abilities, and the lack of some factors was clearly distinguishable from the texts. The not adapted group, however, were closer to the other end of the

axis, and they described their failure to understand and act effectively in different situations. The second axis, indicating a positive motivation towards change distinguished the types so that both the ideally adapted and the positively adapting groups were positive and motivated to change in order to adapt, whereas the ambiguously adapting group were more ambiguously motivated, despite the many competencies they possessed. The not adapted group were at the other end of the axis, and the lack of motivation to adapt was evident in their interviews. To sum up, the ideally adapted group could be called competent and motivated. The positively adapting group were a little less competent but were motivated. The ambiguously adapting group had many competencies but with less motivation to change, and this in particular affected their abilities in flexibility and broadmindedness. The not adapted group lacked both competencies as well as motivation. In describing the competencies and motivation, I refer here to qualities that can change, and according to the interviews especially motivation *can change* from one situation or life circumstance to another. Competencies are more likely to increase with experience. So the types I found in the texts describe the situation at a certain time, illuminating the picture of *prototypes that are in flux* (Figure 6).

Regarding the five dimensions of adaptation in different types of adaptation, three dimensions, namely broadmindedness, flexibility and extroversion were present in the types with different grades. In broadmindedness and flexibility, a fine line goes between positively adapting and ambiguously adapting. The ambiguously adapting group possessed many features of broadmindedness and flexibility, but they expressed more ambiguous feelings than the positively adapting and ideally adapted groups. Individuals who had not adapted had the most negative expressions on these dimensions. In ideally adapted type the majority were natural extroverts, while in other types striving extroverts were in majority. All the respondents who talked about adventure were either ideally adapted or positively adapting. Self-efficacy is a complete exception. The dimension was found clearly in the texts (40% of the respondents took the issue up), but these people could be found in all the types, including those who felt they had not adapted. I will deal with these connections in more detail in the converted data analysis phase.

Considering expatriate status and the family situation a few words should be mentioned here. In all the types there were both expatriates and expatriate spouses. Working and non-working spouses could also be found in all the types. Nor was there any group that differed according to the family situation. Single expatriates, couples without children as well as families with children could be found in all the types. In other words, if these facts had some effect on adaptation, it was more of a personal nature and could not be found as a general dividing factor. Quite a few respondents in the course of the interview

brought up the positive effect of family support and as a consequence family cohesion. These individuals could be found in all types.

The substantial workload was discussed in all the types. In some of the cases this affected social relationships. Some individuals had very little free time and therefore their social networks were limited. Long working hours could be seen from this point of view as slowing down adaptation in certain aspects. On the other hand, as explicated in the dimensions' results, the multicultural work environment as such had helped in acquiring the many skills and abilities needed for adaptation.

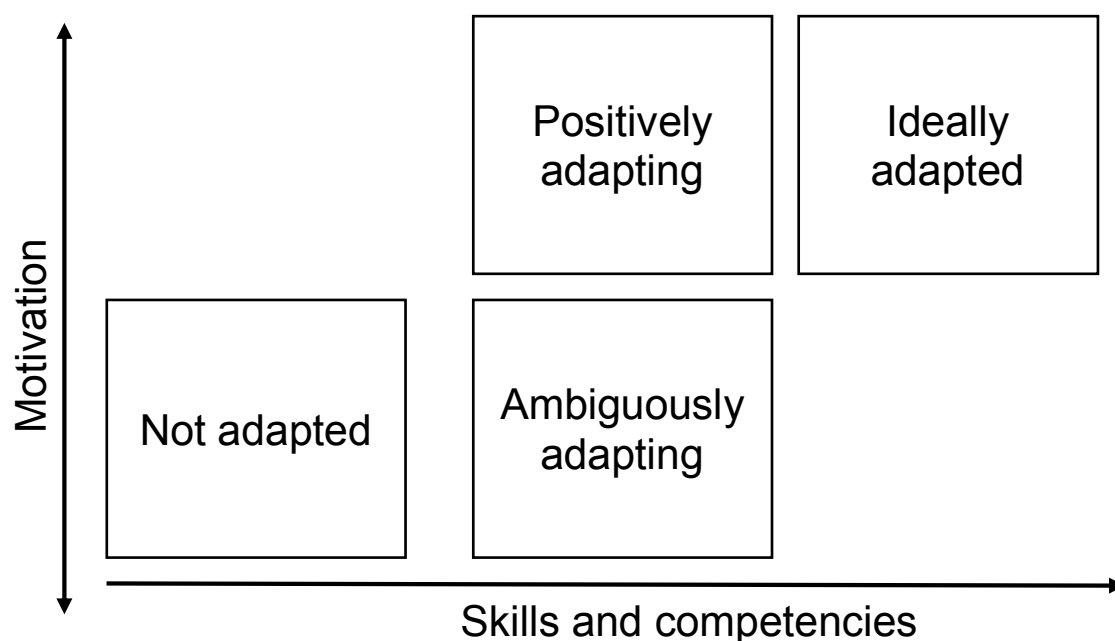


Figure 6 Types of adaptation in continuums of motivation and competencies

8.6 CULTURAL FRAME SHIFTING IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

There are some additional issues to be discussed which came up in the course of qualitative analyses. As could already be noticed in the dimensions concerning adaptation, the multicultural environment has an effect on adaptation in many ways. The multicultural nature of Brussels environment was mostly seen by Finnish expatriates as a facilitating factor in the

adaptation process. In a multicultural environment there are numerous “cultural lenses”, and as one is in constant contact with other cultures, sometimes even without closer communication, one learns to see things from others’ point of view. Yet these expatriates could not be called biculturals. Could they be called multiculturals? At least one can say that many of them had gained the ability to cultural frame shifting. This was obvious when they explained their thoughts and experiences.

“This is kind of a path that you travel and learn the customs of the country I mean continuously, you learn that all right, this is not the way to behave here. It is also unconscious I believe, this travelling and proceeding, and it is constant. ... I mean of course I know the basics since I have been here quite a long time, but still constantly there are new issues, especially since there are so many nationalities here, and now these new member states, now you start learning from them, there are many Kosovars and other nationalities, again a new territory, once you start communicating with them. And in the playground there are lots of Russians and Polish and all, it’s so nice to start learning totally new things.”

Woman, 10 years abroad

“I have learned to appreciate how well things are in Finland, the social security and everything works fine, it is almost free, as well. On the other hand, here I have got to know different kinds of people from different cultures and maybe I have learned to respect more different kinds of people, since when you live in Finland you just see Finns.”

Woman, 7 years abroad

Ethnic identity was not a topic in this study at hand, but it came up so often in the interviews that it is worth mentioning. Following Ashmore, Deaux, and McLauhlin-Volpe’s (2004) conceptualization of collective identity, several of the nine elements the authors discussed could be found in the texts describing ethnic identity. Such elements as self-categorization (including both comments categorizing oneself as a Finn and an assessment of being a prototypical Finn); both positive and negative evaluations about the characteristics of Finns; the importance of ethnic identity to oneself; and behavioural involvement (one’s own actions implicating Finnish identity) could be abundantly retrieved from the texts. Ethnic identity was connected in the interviews also to the ability to see issues from new perspectives. Most respondents pondered, some quite extensively, about their perception of their own cultural background, and how it has changed. With the exception of a few

respondents who did not bring up their thoughts about their own nationality, practically all the rest discussed the topic at length. Quite a few explained that as they had acquired distance between their own country and their own people, and had experiences in a new milieu, they could make comparisons between nationalities and could see their own culture in a new light. Even though none of the questions concerned ethnic identity, it nevertheless came up in the answers. The questions about cultural behaviour patterns in fact led respondents to think about their own culture, not just behavioural patterns, but how they thought about their own origins and their place in the world, a topic which is also part of cultural frame shifting.

“We Finns, we are a pretty good nationality, generally speaking, I mean Finns have nothing to be ashamed of compared to other nationalities, meaning that if Finns have some problems with self-confidence, they really should not have any.”

Man, 7 years abroad

“It is always polite to try to adapt and (laughs) even learn the languages, as well as live respecting local traditions as much as possible, and of course, with open eyes and an open mind, but still I am a Finn and will remain a Finn almost hundred percent, but still respecting others, not just Belgians but everybody who is present here. And to be aware that I can be proud of being a Finn but being humbly proud, we are rather rare, we are some five and a half million in the whole world – and when you look at it, here in Belgium where there is such a mix of nationalities, we really are quite strangers here, a rare species.”

Man, 5 years abroad

“I respect Finland more than before, but I also criticize it more. In a way, you see, you can have a view from outside, you get a kind of broader perspective on many things because you do not live there...in a small country...I mean in its reality I mean you can see from a distance both the issues of Finland and the issues of the country of residence, meaning you are always a kind of observer.”

Woman, 10 years abroad

Another finding worth mentioning is also connected to cultural frame shifting. About half of the respondents brought up at some point of the interview the opinion that it felt easiest to socialize with other individuals who had also lived abroad. They were not only talking about other Finns, but several

interviewees brought up the fact that if a person came from *any* country and had not lived abroad before, their perspective seemed narrower. Quite a few actually explained this with the word “perspective”. Some included into this wider perspective category also friends and acquaintances who had simply travelled a lot. This is in line with the presumption of Benet-Martinez et al. (2006) that extensive travelling may help to gain greater understanding “of one’s own cultural makeup” (p. 401). I will return to the concept of cultural frame shifting in the discussion section.

9 THE RESULTS OF THE SECOND PHASE

9.1 CONVERTED VARIABLES IN ANALYSES

The second phase of analyses consists of the survey data covering the results in Davis's (1994) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) and Schwartz's (Schwartz et al., 1999) Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) as well as conversions done to the results in the qualitative phase. The types of adaptation were transformed into numerical data, from 1 (not adapted) to 4 (ideally adapted). In addition, the following variables were converted into numerical form from the texts: years spent abroad, within an accuracy of six months; language ability (coded into: 1 = does not speak French or Flemish, 2 = speaks some French or Flemish, 3 = speaks French or Flemish fluently); and friendship network (1 = no friends in Belgium, 2 = mainly Finnish friends, 3 = multicultural friendship network). Respondents were also coded into expatriates and expatriate spouses (1 = expatriate, 2 = expatriate spouse), and according to education (1 = college or vocational degree, 2 = university degree). The five dimensions retrieved from the texts were each coded into bipolar categories. Broadmindedness was present in every interview in some way. A division was made between those who highlighted tolerance or *willingness* to understand (growing broadmindedness) and those describing both open mindedness and an *understanding* of different perspectives (extensive broadmindedness). Flexibility was coded into those taking up uncertainty or the negative sides more often, in other words more uncertain flexible behaviour (named evolving flexibility, indicating flexibility in motion), and those describing the positive sides of flexibility broadly, referring to overall competence in flexibility (inclusive flexibility). Extroversion was coded into those finding it more effortful to be extrovert (including such codes as "you have to dare" and "you have to learn to be extrovert"), named here as striving extroverts, and natural extroverts, describing those to whom it was natural and effortless to be extrovert. Self-efficacy and adventurousness were coded into dummy variables, whether they were found in the interview or not. (See Table 4 for a basic description of converted variables.)¹⁹

¹⁹ For the variables spouse/expatriate, level of education and age as well as time spent abroad, see the methodology section.

Table 4 *Converted variables, n and percent*

	n	%
Categories of adaptation		
Not adapted	3	5.8
Ambiguously adapting	13	25.0
Positively adapting	18	34.6
Ideally adapted	18	34.6
Total	52	100.0
Language ability		
No French, no Flemish	6	11.5
Some French or Flemish	20	38.5
Fluent French or Flemish	26	50.0
Total	52	100.0
Friendship network in Belgium		
No friends	2	3.8
Mainly Finnish friends	17	32.7
Multicultural network	33	63.5
Total	52	100.0
Broadmindedness		
Growing broadmindedness	29	55.8
Extensive broadmindedness	23	44.2
Total	52	100.0
Flexibility		
Evolving flexibility	24	46.2
Inclusive flexibility	28	53.8
Total	52	100.0
Extroversion		
Striving extrovert	28	53.8
Natural extrovert	24	46.2
Total	52	100.0
Self-efficacy		
Did not mention	31	59.6
Mentioned	21	40.4
Total	52	100.0
Adventurer		
Did not mention	40	76.9
Mentioned	12	23.1
Total	52	100.0

All the statistical analyses were conducted with non-parametric methods due to the small sample size and inequalities in variances. I will first describe the basic variables of the survey data and then continue to the analysis of the data where the conversions from qualitative analysis are included.

9.2 THE INITIAL DESCRIPTION OF BASIC VARIABLES IN SURVEY DATA

The means and standard deviations for major variables in quantitative data as well as value rank order can be seen in Table 5. In this study universalism was regarded as the most important value, and self-direction came second. Work value was in third place. If we compare these results to Puohiniemi's (2006) (see Table 6) results for Finns in general and Finns with similar education (as most expatriates in this study had an academic education), the most striking difference is shown with security. Security is in the second rank in Puohiniemi's results both in the general population as well as for academics, whereas it is only in fifth place with Finnish expatriates. The other main difference concerns benevolence, which is in both Finnish samples in first place, but came third with expatriates, after universalism and self-direction (if work value is discarded). Regarding work values, a comparison can be made with the research conducted in the Finnish municipality of Pyhtää in 2007 (Helkama, 2012a). Work value was in 7th rank in Pyhtää. With Brussels expatriates work values were distinctively higher, being in third rank. Empathy scores were in line with studies made in Finland concerning aspects of empathy (e.g. Myyry et al., 2010).

Table 5 *Means and standard deviations for major variables*

Variable	M	SD	Rank order of values
Age	38.83	7.34	
Empathic concern	2.79	0.65	
Perspective taking	2.75	0.57	
Personal distress	1.37	0.66	
Fantasy	2.36	0.79	
Universalism	4.91	0.78	1
Self-direction	4.86	0.62	2
Work	4.63	0.86	3
Benevolence	4.58	0.64	4
Hedonism	4.28	0.98	5
Security	4.26	0.84	6
Stimulation	4.10	1.10	7
Conformity	3.82	0.94	8
Achievement	3.37	1.07	9
Power	2.73	0.89	10
Tradition	2.66	0.78	11

Table 6 *The rank order of values: Finnish expatriates, Finnish in general and Finnish with academic education (the latter two from Puohiniemi, 2006)*

Value	Finnish expatriates	Finnish sample, (national)	Finnish with academic education
Benevolence	3.	1.	1.
Security	5.	2.	2.
Universalism	1.	3./4.	3.
Self-direction	2.	6.	4.
Conformity	7.	3./4.	5.
Hedonism	4.	5.	6.
Achievement	8.	7.	7.
Stimulation	7.	8.	8.
Tradition	10.	9.	9.
Power	9.	10.	10.
Work	(3.)	-	-

Spearman correlations for age, empathy and values can be seen in Table 7. Age correlated positively with conformity (.30) and negatively with hedonism (-.29). The intercorrelations between values follow the theoretical structure of values (Schwartz, 1992). The strongest correlations were between power and achievement (.70), conformity and security (.64), hedonism and stimulation (.61), and stimulation and self-direction (.57). The work values were located between the higher-order of conservation and self-transcendence. Work values correlated positively with security (.39), universalism (.29), benevolence (.28), and conformity (.28). Empathic concern correlated with several values. Significant positive correlation was found with benevolence (.53), universalism (.51), work (.33), and conformity (.28), while negative correlations were detected with achievement (-.33), and power (-.29). Perspective taking correlated positively with conformity (.28). Personal distress correlated positively with security (.30) and, even more significantly, negatively with self-direction (-.47).

Mann Whitney's U-test was used to study gender differences in the sample, since some variables were not normally distributed. Gender differences in the data were scarce. The three significant differences were tradition, empathic concern and fantasy. Men scored higher on tradition ($U = 206.00$, $p = .031$) and women higher on empathic concern ($U = 201.50$, $p = .025$) and fantasy ($U = 215.50$, $p = .049$).

Table 7 *Intercorrelations among major variables (Spearman correlation).*

	Age	EC	PT	PD	F	Self-di	Univ	Benev	Conf	Trad	Secur	Pow	Achie	Hedon	Stimul
Age															
EC	-.10														
PT	.06	.22													
PD	-.13	-.03	-.18												
F	-.01	.35*	.15	.08											
Self-di	.22	.09	.21	-.47**	.12										
Univ	.15	.51**	.22	-.18	.17	.26									
Benev	.00	.53**	.20	-.07	.20	.28*	.18								
Conf	.30*	.28*	.28*	.17	-.06	-.25	.11	.17							
Trad	.19	.07	.13	.25	-.01	-.27*	-.07	-.02	.40**						
Secur	.15	.19	.07	.30*	-.11	-.18	.17	.11	.64**	.38**					
Pow	-.05	-.29*	-.07	-.14	-.08	.13	-.29*	-.08	-.26	-.17	-.11				
Achie	-.12	-.33*	-.04	-.14	-.01	.17	-.17	-.08	-.23	-.11	-.11	.70**			
Hedon	-.29*	-.06	.11	-.04	.22	.34*	.20	.20	-.18	-.23	-.10	-.01	.37**		
Stimul	-.18	.11	.14	-.25	.19	.57**	.22	.14	-.26	-.33*	-.20	.12	.28*	.61**	
Work	.09	.33*	-.15	-.01	-.10	.07	.29*	.28*	.28*	.12	.39**	-.18	-.23	-.08	-.07

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

EC = Empathic concern; PT = Perspective taking; PD = Personal distress; F = Fantasy.

9.3 DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTATION IN STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

I first studied the converted dimensions of adaptation, whether other variables differed significantly within each dimension. Mann Whitney's U-test was used to study differences in values, aspects of empathy, years spent abroad, and age. Gender, if the person arrived as an expatriate or a spouse, level of education, friendship network and language ability were studied with crosstabulations.

Regarding broadmindedness those in the extensive broadmindedness group scored significantly higher on self-direction ($U = 198.00, p = .012$) and perspective taking ($U = 222.00, p = .039$) than those in growing broadmindedness. (For means and standard deviations of significant differences on values or empathy and dimensions, see Table 8.) The age of interviewees was also significantly higher in the extensive broadmindedness group ($M = 43.0, SD = 8.39$) than in growing broadmindedness ($M = 35.6, SD = 4.21$) ($U = 151.00, p = .001$).

Table 8 *Means and standard deviations in values and empathy having significant differences in dichotomies of dimensions of adaptation*

Dichotomy	Self-dir.		Univ.		Conf.		PT		PD	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Gr. broadm.	4.66	.56					2.60	.61		
Ex. broadm.	5.11	.61					2.94	.46		
Evolv. Flexibility	4.65	.63	4.60	.86						
Incl. flexibility	5.04	.56	5.18	.60						
Striving extrovert	4.69	.55			4.13	.80			1.63	.56
Natural extrovert	5.06	.65			3.47	.98			1.06	.64
Not mentioned adventurousness	4.76	.61								
Adventurousness	5.19	.54								

Note: Gr. Broadm = Growing broadmindedness; Ex. broadm. = Extensive broadmindedness; Evolv. Flexibility = Evolving flexibility; Incl. flexibility = Inclusive flexibility; PT = Perspective taking; PD = Personal distress

In flexibility those accentuating inclusive flexibility scored significantly higher on self-direction ($U = 211.50, p = .021$) and universalism ($U = 189.00, p = .007$) than those who discussed evolving flexibility more. Those accentuating inclusive flexibility were older ($M = 42.11, SD = 7.86$) than the evolving

flexibility group ($M = 35.00$, $SD = 4.30$) ($U = 142.50$, $p = .000$). The group that accentuated inclusive flexibility had also lived abroad significantly longer ($M = 7.84$, $SD = 4.80$) than those accentuating evolving flexibility ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 2.28$) ($U = 228.50$, $p = .048$). However, age and number of years spent abroad did not correlate.

In the extroversion dimension natural extroverts scored significantly higher on self-direction, and significantly lower on conformity and personal distress than striving extroverts ($U = 212.50$, $p = .022$ on self-direction; $U = 186.00$, $p = .006$ on conformity; and $U = 166.00$, $p = .002$ on personal distress). In the crosstabulation of extroversion and friendship networking it was noticeable that almost all natural extroverts (22/24; 92%) had multicultural friendship networks, whereas amongst striving extroverts almost 40% (11/28) had multicultural friendship networks and the others (15/28; 54%) mainly Finnish friends, and two had no friends. The differences were significant ($\chi^2 = 15.39(2)$, $p < .001$) (Table 9). Three quarters of natural extroverts also spoke fluent French or Flemish (18/24; 75%) whereas striving extroverts could be found more evenly in all the categories of language fluency, the majority being in the group speaking some French or Flemish. The differences were significant ($\chi^2 = 11.27(2)$, $p = .004$) (Table 10).

In self-efficacy there were no differences between the two groups, either in values, empathy or in other converted variables.

In adventurousness those respondents who talked about the topic scored significantly higher on self-direction ($U = 142.50$, $p = .033$) than those who did not mention adventure. The two groups had no significant differences with other converted variables.

Table 9 *Friendship networks among striving and natural extroverts*

Friendship network	No friends		Mainly Finns		Multicultural		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Striving extrovert	2	7.1	15	53.6	11	39.3	28	100.0
Natural extrovert	0	0.0	2	8.3	22	91.7	24	100.0
$\chi^2 = 15.39(2)$, $p < .001$								

Table 10 *Language ability of French or Flemish among striving and natural extroverts*

Language ability	Does not speak		Speaks some		Fluent		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Striving extrovert	5	17.9	15	53.6	8	28.6	28	100.0
Natural extrovert	1	4.2	5	20.8	18	75.0	24	100.0
$\chi^2 = 11.27(2), p = .004$								

9.3.1 DIMENSIONS CONNECTIONS TO EACH OTHER

As the crosstabulations were done between dimensions in converted data, three significant correlations were found. In broadmindedness and flexibility most individuals belonged either to (1) the evolving flexibility and growing broadmindedness or (2) to the inclusive flexibility and extensive broadmindedness ($\chi^2 = 18.19, p < .001$). Those who talked about adventure were almost all in the group of inclusive flexibility ($\chi^2 = 5.46(1), p = .019$) and the majority of those who talked about self-efficacy were striving extroverts ($\chi^2 = 4.38(1), p = .036$). For the results, see Table 11.

Table 11 *Crosstabulations of dimensions*

Broadmindedness and flexibility						
Broadmindedness						
Flexibility	Growing broadmindedness		Extensive broadmindedness		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Evolving flexibility	21	87.5	3	12.5	24	100.0
Inclusive flexibility	8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100.0
$X^2 = 18.19 (1), p < .001$						

Flexibility and adventurousness						
Flexibility						
Adventurousness	Evolving flexibility		Inclusive flexibility		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Not mentioned	22	55.0	18	45.0	40	100.0
Mentioned	2	16.7	10	83.3	12	100.0
$X^2 = 5.46(1), p = .019$						

Extroversion and self-efficacy						
Extroversion						
Self-efficacy	Striving extrovert		Natural extrovert		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Not mentioned	13	41.9	18	58.1	31	100.0
Mentioned	15	71.4	6	28.6	21	100.0
$X^2 = 4.38(1), p = .036$						

9.4 TYPES OF ADAPTATION IN THE CONVERTED PHASE

In the types of adaptation the “not adapted” group was remarkably smaller than other types (3 persons compared to 13, 18 and 18). Therefore this type could not be included in the statistical analyses. The ratings of not adapted are nevertheless shown either in tables or as footnotes. The concept of not adapted will be discussed later in detail.

9.4.1 TYPES OF ADAPTATION, VALUES AND EMPATHY

In the analysis concerning values and empathy between three types of adaptation, the Kruskal Wallis –test showed significant differences in three variables: self-direction value ($\chi^2(2) = 12.79, p = .002$), stimulation value ($\chi^2(2) = 6.26, p = .044$) and empathy aspect personal distress ($\chi^2(2) = 12.71, p = .002$). These three variables were taken for further inspection. In the initial examination of the means between groups it was already noticeable that the ideally adapted scored higher on both self direction and stimulation and lower on personal distress than the two other groups (Table 12).

Non-parametric multivariate comparisons between types were studied separately comparing each group with the other two using Mann Whitney’s U-test. Due to the number of analyses, the alpha levels were controlled by Bonferroni adjustment. It turned out that self-direction was significantly higher with ideally adapted than positively adapting ($U = 66.50, p = .006$) or ambiguously adapting ($U = 41.50, p = .006$), but positively adapting and ambiguously adapting did not differ from each other on self-direction. On stimulation value the groups did not differ significantly after Bonferroni adjustment, although the difference between ideally adapted and positively adapting was close to significant ($U = 88.00, p = .057$). On personal distress the ideally adapted group had significantly lower scores than both positively adapting ($U = 71.00, p = .009$) or ambiguously adapting ($U = 40.50, p = .003$). Positively adapting and ambiguously adapting types did not differ from each other on personal distress.

To sum up, the ideally adapted type scored significantly higher on self-direction and lower on personal distress than positively or ambiguously adapting expatriates. Ambiguously adapting and positively adapting groups did not have any significant differences concerning values or empathy. In the not adapted group the results of one participant deviated substantially from the other two.

Table 12 Means and standard deviations of categories of adaptation in self-direction, stimulation and personal distress

Category	n	Self-direction		Stimulation		Personal distress	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Not adapted	3	5.00	0.25	4.44	0.69	1.33	0.58
Ambiguously adapting	13	4.58 ^a	0.66	3.82	1.05	1.74 ^c	0.69
Positively adapting	18	4.63 ^b	0.59	3.72	1.01	1.55 ^d	0.59
Ideally adapted	18	5.28 ^{ab}	0.43	4.56	1.14	0.94 ^{cd}	0.50

Note: Means that share a superscript are significantly different at the $p < .05$ level or less. The not adapted category is not included in the analysis.

9.4.2 DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTATION IN DIFFERENT TYPES

In Table 13 the crosstabulations between three types of adaptation and the dimensions are shown. There was a distinctive division how broadmindedness was expressed in different types. Almost all ideally adapted (15/18; 83%) were in the extensive broadmindedness category. Positively adapting were more evenly spread in both growing (11/18; 61%) and extensive broadmindedness (7/18; 39%) and all but one ambiguously adapting respondents were in the growing broadmindedness category. The division was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 18.10(2)$, $p < .001$). All persons who had not adapted were in the growing broadmindedness category.

Regarding flexibility, almost all the ideally adapted belonged to inclusive flexibility (16/18; 89%), whereas amongst the ambiguously adapting group all belonged to evolving flexibility. The positively adapting were in between these two groups, two-thirds of them highlighting inclusive flexibility (12/18; 67%) and one-third evolving flexibility (6/18; 33%). The differences were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 25.41(2)$, $p < .001$). All persons belonging to the not adapted group belonged to evolving flexibility.

The dichotomy of extroversion was also divided differently between the types. In the ideally adapted type the majority were natural extroverts (13/18; 72%), whereas in the positively adapting group striving extroverts were in the majority (11/18; 61%). In the ambiguously adapting group the majority were striving extroverts (9/13; 69%), as well. The differences were significant ($\chi^2 = 6.35(2)$, $p = .042$) but to a lesser degree than in broadmindedness and flexibility. All the not adapted group were striving extroverts.

In mentioning self-efficacy there were no significant differences between the three types. The not adapted group adds to this by having two individuals who mentioned growing self-efficacy while one of them did not.

In the adventurousness dichotomy only the ideally adapted and positively adapting talked about adventure. A little less than a half (8/18; 44%) of the ideally adapted mentioned adventurousness, and about a fifth (4/14; 22%) of the positively adapting. None in the ambiguously adapting group mentioned adventure (nor in the not adapted group). The differences between the three types were significant ($\chi^2 = 8.14(2)$, $p = .017$).

All in all, the ideally adapted scored significantly more often in extensive broadmindedness, inclusive flexibility, natural extroverts and adventurousness, and one could also see declining amounts in these dimensions when moving from the positively adapting to the ambiguously adapting group. On the other hand, self-efficacy did not differ between the types of adaptation.

Table 13 *Dimensions of adaptation in types of adaptation*

Type	Broadmindedness				Total	
	Growing		Extensive			
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Ambiguously adapting	12	92.3	1	7.7	13	100.0
Positively adapting	11	61.1	7	38.9	18	100.0
Ideally adapted	3	16.7	15	83.3	18	100.0
$\chi^2 = 18.10(2), p < .001$						

Note: All the not adapted group belonged to growing broadmindedness.

Type	Flexibility					
	Evolving		Inclusive		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Ambiguously adapting	13	100.0	0	0	13	100.0
Positively adapting	6	33.3	12	66.7	18	100.0
Ideally adapted	2	11.1	16	88.9	18	100.0
$\chi^2 = 25.41(2), p < .001$						

Note: All the not adapted group belonged to evolving flexibility.

Type	Extrovert					
	Striving		Natural		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Ambiguously adapting	9	69.2	4	30.8	13	100.0
Positively adapting	11	61.1	7	38.9	18	100.0
Ideally adapted	5	27.8	13	72.2	18	100.0
$\chi^2 = 6.35(2), p = .042$						

Note: All the not adapted group belonged to striving extroverts.

Type	Self-efficacy				Total	
	Not mentioned		Mentioned			
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Ambiguously adapting	9	69.2	4	30.8	13	100.0
Positively adapting	8	44.4	10	55.6	18	100.0
Ideally adapted	13	72.2	5	27.8	18	100.0
$\chi^2 = 3.40(2), p = .182$						

Note: In the not adapted group two respondents mentioned self-efficacy, one did not.

Type	Adventurousness				Total	
	Not mentioned		Mentioned			
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Ambiguously adapting	13	100.0	0	0	13	100.0
Positively adapting	14	77.8	4	22.2	18	100.0
Ideally adapted	10	55.6	8	44.4	18	100.0
$\chi^2 = 8.14(2), p = .017$						

Note: None of the not adapted group mentioned adventurousness.

9.4.3 TYPES OF ADAPTATION AND OTHER CONVERTED DATA

The possible connections of types of adaptation to other basic and converted variables were examined next. The variables were: gender, age, time spent abroad, level of education, if the person came as an expatriate or a spouse, friendship networks and language ability (of the country).

The following variables showed significantly different scores between the three types of adaptation: time spent abroad, friendship networks, and gender.

The time the respondents had lived abroad in three types of adaptation was tested with the Kruskal Wallis –test, which showed significant differences ($\chi^2 = 19.98 (3), p < .001$). Mann Whitney’s tests and Bonferroni corrections were carried out to find out which categories were significantly different from each other. The results confirmed that the ideally adapted group ($M = 10.0, SD = 4.21$) had spent on average a significantly longer time abroad than positively adapting ($M = 4.5, SD = 3.8$), ($U = 47.50, p < .01$) or ambiguously adapting ($M = 5.4, SD = 5.5$), ($U = 44.50, p = .01$), but positively adapting and ambiguously adapting did not differ from each other. (See Table 14 for all types.) Although the not adapted group was not included in the analysis, it is nevertheless evident that the average time they had lived abroad was considerably less than in other groups ($M = 2.2, SD = .76$).

Table 14 Mean, standard deviation, range and median of time spent abroad in types of adaptation

Type	Time spent abroad					
	n	M	SD	Range		Mdn
Not adapted	3	2.2	.76	Min.	Max.	2.0
Ambiguously adapting	13	5.4 ^a	2.37	2.0	9.0	5.5
Positively adapting	18	4.5 ^b	2.62	2.0	11.0	3.8
Ideally adapted	18	10.0 ^{ab}	4.21	2.5	17.0	11.3

Note: Means that share a superscript are significantly different at the $p < .05$ level. The not adapted group was not included in analysis.

The three types differed also when comparing friendship networks. Within the ideally adapted group all except one had multicultural friendship networks, whereas amongst positively adapting and ambiguously adapting about half in each group had mainly Finnish friends and half had multicultural friendship networks, the positively adapting group having multicultural networks slightly

more often than the ambiguously adapting group, (Table 15). The differences were significant ($\chi^2 = 9.80(2)$, $p = .007$). Among the not adapted group, two respondents said they had not found any friends and one had mainly Finns as friends.

Table 15 *Friendship networks in types of adaptation*

Type	Friendship networks					
	Mainly Finns		Multicultural		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Ambiguously adapting	7	53.8	6	46.2	13	100.0
Positively adapting	8	44.4	10	55.6	18	100.0
Ideally adapted	1	5.6	17	94.4	18	100.0
$X^2 = 9.80(2), p = .007$						

Note: In addition to these figures, in the 'not adapted' type there was one interviewee who had mainly Finns as friends and two with no friends.

When studying the types of adaptation and gender with crosstabs it was found that all men, except one, were either positively adapting or ideally adapted, whereas women were more evenly represented in all types (and individuals who had not adapted were all women) (Table 16). The differences were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 9.07(2)$, $p = .011$).

To sum up these results, the ideally adapted group stood out again, having lived longer abroad and having multicultural friendship networks more often than the positively or ambiguously adapting groups. An interesting finding was that almost all the ambiguously adapting were women. Even though there were more women taking part in the study (32 compared to 20 men), it is nevertheless remarkable that almost all the men were either positively adapting or ideally adapted. This issue will be contemplated further in the discussion.

Table 16 *Gender distribution in types of adaptation*

Type	Gender			
	Men		Women	
	n	%	n	%
Ambiguously adapting	1	5.0	12	41.4
Positively adapting	11	55.0	7	24.1
Ideally adapted	8	40.0	10	34.5
Total	20	100.0	29	100.0
$\chi^2 = 9.07(2)$, $p = .011$				

Note: In category 'not adapted' (n = 3) all persons were women.

10 INFERENCE OF QUALITATIVE AND CONVERSION MIXED DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS

In the inference section the goal is to draw together the results of both qualitative and conversion mixed analysis. I will first recapitulate the results concerning the dimensions and proceed then to the types of adaptation. Finally, I present two models based on the results of this study: the model of adaptation to a multicultural environment, and the model of the basic components of adaptation to a multicultural environment. The latter describes the components of adaptation on a practical level.

10.1 THE INFERENCE OF DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTATION

In the conversion phase the dimension broadmindedness was divided into growing broadmindedness and extensive broadmindedness. Growing broadmindedness portrays openness and tolerance, and the willingness to understand different ways of life and conventions, whereas extensive broadmindedness illuminates further the ability to be broadminded, especially the ability to see issues from different perspectives. This dimensionality could be distinguished in qualitative analysis so that different categories formed the continuum from one pole to another. The statistical analyses revealed that those in the extensive broadmindedness category scored significantly higher on self-direction and perspective taking than those belonging to growing broadmindedness. Those in the extensive broadmindedness were also significantly older than those in the growing broadmindedness.

The second dimension, flexibility, entailed the ability to switch one's behavior in varying situations, tolerance of ambiguity, discretion in uncertain situations, and also forced flexibility. The flexibility dimension was divided into evolving and inclusive flexibility in conversion analysis. As inclusive flexibility refers to overall competence in applying flexible behaviour as the situation requires, evolving flexibility refers to more uncertain or reluctant behaviour concerning flexibility. In qualitative analysis this dimensionality could be seen *within* each category that formed together the dimension flexibility. In conversion data analysis those accentuating inclusive flexibility scored significantly higher on self-direction and universalism than those stressing evolving flexibility. Inclusive flexibility also correlated with age and the time the respondents had lived abroad. The broadmindedness and flexibility dimensions were closely linked so that most individuals belonged either to evolving flexibility and growing broadmindedness or inclusive

flexibility and extensive broadmindedness. Moreover, 36% of the inclusive flexibility group mentioned adventure.

In the extroversion dimension two separate categories could also be found. Those named natural extroverts described easiness and effortlessness of being extrovert, while striving extroverts said they needed to make a conscious effort to act in an extrovert manner. In statistical analysis natural extroverts scored higher on self-direction, and lower on conformism and personal distress than striving extroverts. Natural extroverts also had more often multicultural friendship networks and were more often fluent in French or Flemish than striving extroverts. Striving extroverts talked more often about self-efficacy than natural extroverts.

The definition of self-efficacy in this study is in line with Bandura's (1977, 1993) definition, namely "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes". To recapitulate the results in the qualitative phase concerning self-efficacy, the subject was discussed in 40% of the interviews, and its significance for coping was obvious. To produce statistics the self-efficacy dimension was coded into a dummy variable based on whether the respondent mentioned it or not. The majority of those who talked about self-efficacy were striving extroverts.

Adventurousness in this study stands for curiosity, challenge and excitement. 23% of the respondents mentioned adventurousness. Those who had talked about adventure scored significantly higher on self-direction. Almost all adventurers were also in the group of inclusive flexibility.

10.2 THE INFERENCE OF TYPES OF ADAPTATION

Of the four types of adaptation formed in the qualitative phase three could be included in the converted data analysis. The type not adapted could not be included in the analysis as such due the small size of the group. The respondents in this type were nevertheless also coded to dichotomies in the converted variables of dimensions, and the other converted data concerning this type were also available. The results were mentioned as well as compared to other types. I will begin the inference with the ideally adapted.

10.2.1 IDEALLY ADAPTED IN INFERENCE

In qualitative analysis those who were ideally adapted were described as follows: "Overall competence and fluency in new situations as well as success in social relationships and communication competence were ubiquitous in this group." The motivation toward change was also positive in this group. The statistical analysis strengthened the picture of good adaptation in several ways. Almost all the ideally adapted belonged to extensive broadmindedness, inclusive flexibility, and the majority were also natural extroverts. Two-thirds

of those who spoke of adventurousness were ideally adapted. Some mentioned self-efficacy, but the majority did not bring the subject up. Almost all the ideally adapted had a multicultural friendship network and over half were fluent either in French or Flemish. A remarkable feature here is that ideally adapted individuals had lived on average significantly longer abroad ($M = 10.0$ years) than the respondents in other groups. There are two possible explanations: either the years spent abroad eventually led to ideal adaptation, or those who adapt easier may choose to stay longer abroad. Regarding values and empathy, ideally adapted respondents scored significantly higher on self-direction and significantly lower on personal distress than positively or ambiguously adapting, which favours the latter explanation, as values and personal distress in particular are relatively stable.

10.2.2 POSITIVELY ADAPTING IN INFERENCE

The characteristics of this type in the qualitative phase provided the picture of an ongoing process of adaptation. Life and coping was described in a positive light, but with some factors missing that could be found in the ideally adapted. Most often this factor was either inadequate language ability and due to that limited possibilities to broaden friendship networks, or a still ongoing effort to learn to cope in a foreign environment, and to understand how to act in various situations. For some the considerable workload also restricted social relationships and through this slowed the adaptation process. But as the name of this type describes, the positive motivation to change was present in each interviewee's descriptions. The analyses in the conversion mixed data analysis gave further details on factors that distinguished the positively adapting group from the ideally adapted. In the four dimensions, broadmindedness, flexibility, extroversion and adventurousness, the differences compared to the ideally adapted were evident: The majority of those positively adapting were in the growing broadmindedness. Two-thirds of the positively adapting type described inclusive flexibility while one-third were in the evolving flexibility. Concerning the extrovert dimension the majority of the positively adapting were striving extroverts. Some positively adapting respondents did mention adventurousness, but fewer than the ideally adapted group. There is one issue worth mentioning here about self-efficacy: almost half (10/21) of those who spoke of increased self-efficacy were in the positively adapting group. This supports picture of those positively adapting having confidence in their own abilities to manage and learn to cope. To give further support to the idea of an ongoing process the average time the positively adapting had spent abroad ($M = 4.5$ years) was significantly less than with the ideally adapted. Regarding friendship networks, a slight majority (56%) had multicultural friendship networks, while the rest mainly had Finnish friends.

10.2.3 AMBIGUOUSLY ADAPTING IN INFERENCE

The ambiguously adapting type was described in the qualitative phase as on average having many competencies needed for adaptation, but with one distinct feature compared to the positively adapting (and the ideally adapted). This factor was an ambiguous attitude towards the motivation to change. As already mentioned in the qualitative analysis, this factor could be connected to the broadmindedness and flexibility dimensions. Conversion data analysis confirmed this. All the ambiguously adapting respondents except for one were represented in growing broadmindedness. As the flexibility was divided into inclusive flexibility and evolving flexibility, all respondents in the ambiguously adapting group were represented in evolving flexibility. In addition, none in the ambiguously adapting group mentioned adventurousness, and the majority were striving extroverts. They differed only a little from the positively adapting in the friendship networking, having slightly more often Finnish friends than multicultural friendship networks; the difference in friendship networks was only remarkable when compared to the ideally adapted. The average years spent abroad with the ambiguously adapting was in fact slightly more than with the positively adapting, the mean being 5.4 years. All but one of the ambiguously adapting respondents were women.

10.2.4 NOT ADAPTED IN INFERENCE

In the qualitative phase it was mentioned that these individuals felt themselves failure in adapting. The general descriptions were about failure in attempts to learn the language, understand different ways of life, and build satisfying friendship networks. The motivation to change was also missing in this group. As this group was significantly smaller than the other types, it was omitted from the statistical analyses. Comparisons were deduced though from the results. Compared to other types, the not adapted group rarely mentioned broadmindedness, but it was nevertheless present in some sentences. Having difficulties in a foreign environment had made some of these individuals understand the difficulties other foreigners might have. Flexibility was also present, but it was clearly evolving and uncertain, and more like an attempt to understand what had gone wrong in various situations. This was also present in other types, especially with the ambiguously adapting, but with more success in understanding. None of the not adapted described any features of natural extroversion, but some had evidently tried to be extrovert and had tried to make contacts. Language ability, or rather the lack of it, had nevertheless limited the success. Two said they had been unable to make any friends, and one had some Finnish friends. An interesting finding with the not adapted was that two out of three felt their self-efficacy had grown remarkably. So despite their general feelings of failure they had managed to

cope somehow in daily life or work, which gave them feelings of success in some aspects.

Regarding the time of living abroad, the not adapted had lived abroad only on average two years, considerably less than the average in other types. All the persons in this type were women.

10.3 ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT, AN ONGOING PROCESS

When reviewing all the results of this study concerning adaptation to a multicultural environment, they indicate a continuum from not adapted to ideally adapted. Qualities and abilities are on a continuum, where the ideally adapted had them all, whereas both the ambiguously adapting and the positively adapting respondents were still in the process of acquiring them, and the not adapted group were at the beginning of the process. Concerning the comparison between the ambiguously adapting and the positively adapting, a definite ranking cannot be deduced based on the results. As mentioned earlier, the types I formed based on the interviews are prototypes, and the individuals in them are more like in certain flux, and as can be recalled, only the ideally adapted group differed significantly from the other two types in values and empathy scores (and the not adapted respondents were omitted from the analysis). The main distinguishing factor separating positively and ambiguously adapting from each other was the ambiguous motivation toward change with the ambiguously adapting group. This was distinguishable in particular in the quotes describing broadmindedness and flexibility. It could be speculated, that since a positive motivation toward change is indeed important when adapting to a foreign milieu, the positively adapting individuals are further in the adaptation process. But it is also possible that the motivation toward change and adaptation is not straightforwardly either positive or negative, but can change with life circumstances. Nevertheless, it is a crucial ingredient behind several components that lead to successful adaptation. The types I have presented were formed from the interviews investigating differences and similarities between the individuals. Therefore, they describe different categories where the individuals could be placed at a certain time, i.e. the interview. Both the texts as well as the results in the conversion mixed data analysis suggest that the types are located on a time continuum, but since this study is not longitudinal, I cannot verify the proposition. However, the results clearly indicate that ideally adapted individuals had the qualities and abilities (including motivation) needed for adaptation, positively and ambiguously adapting individuals had some of those qualities and skills but not all, and not adapted individuals were missing all of them.

Regarding dimensions, the broadmindedness and flexibility dimensions suggest the development from potential (growing broadmindedness) to competence (extensive broadmindedness), and from uncertainty (evolving flexibility) to certainty (inclusive flexibility), describing the process towards a competent and steady way of coping, and an appreciation and understanding of variety in life. These two dimensions proved to be particularly important in a *multicultural* environment. Being extrovert by nature is an asset but not a prerequisite. As one could see in the results, a conscious effort to learn to be extrovert can lead to ideal adaptation as well, perhaps just with more effort. Here again the learning process was distinguishable from the texts. Three other factors were linked to these dimensions: communication competence, language ability and friendship networks. These were also described as changing and developing in the process of adaptation.

Self-efficacy is also clearly something that has increased along with the ability to cope, and was not only assisting to carry on, but was also important from a personal point of view to many. A feeling of self-efficacy obtained through living abroad made individuals believe they had succeeded, in one aspect of life or another.

Time spent abroad also supports the proposition of a process. Whereas the not adapted had only been abroad on average for two years, the ideally adapted had been abroad on average for 10 years. This is a significant difference in terms of time. The two groups in between, ambiguously adapting and positively adapting, were in the middle of the continuum regarding the timeline.

Berry has defined adaptation as being the outcome of acculturation (2006b, 52). Following this definition, one could propose that both the positively adapting and the ambiguously adapting, who seemed most explicitly to be in the process of adaptation, could actually be described as *acculturating*. However, it is difficult to draw the line, in which state individuals (also in other adaptation studies) have reached a “relatively stable state of change” (Berry, 2006b, 52) so I decided to replace the term acculturation with ‘adapting’, referring to the process with both ambiguously and positively adapting.

10.4 A NEW MODEL OF ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

To put together the results on inference, one can draw a new model where the combined results of the model of adaptation to a multicultural environment are laid out (Figure 7). In addition to the five dimensions already discussed in the qualitative phase, general communication competence, language ability and friendship networks are retrieved and added as complementary aspects of the model. As one looks at the dimensions, three main dimensions, namely

broadmindedness, flexibility and extroversion are *competencies*. It has already been explained in the qualitative phase, how broadmindedness and flexibility were formed alongside of experiences gained while living abroad. One can already possess those competencies before moving abroad, but they were also clearly seen through the texts to have evolved while living abroad. Being extrovert is usually regarded as a trait and more of a permanent factor, but the qualitative analysis revealed that it *can* be modified if one has the motivation to do so. *Communication competence* was included in both flexibility and extroversion in qualitative data. Self-efficacy, where respondents brought it up, was also found to have changed, in other words it had increased while living abroad. Adventurousness is the dimension which most resembles a permanent quality, a personal character that some said they possessed but others did not mention. In addition to this language ability of the country as well as multicultural friendship networks were linked to the natural extrovert group.

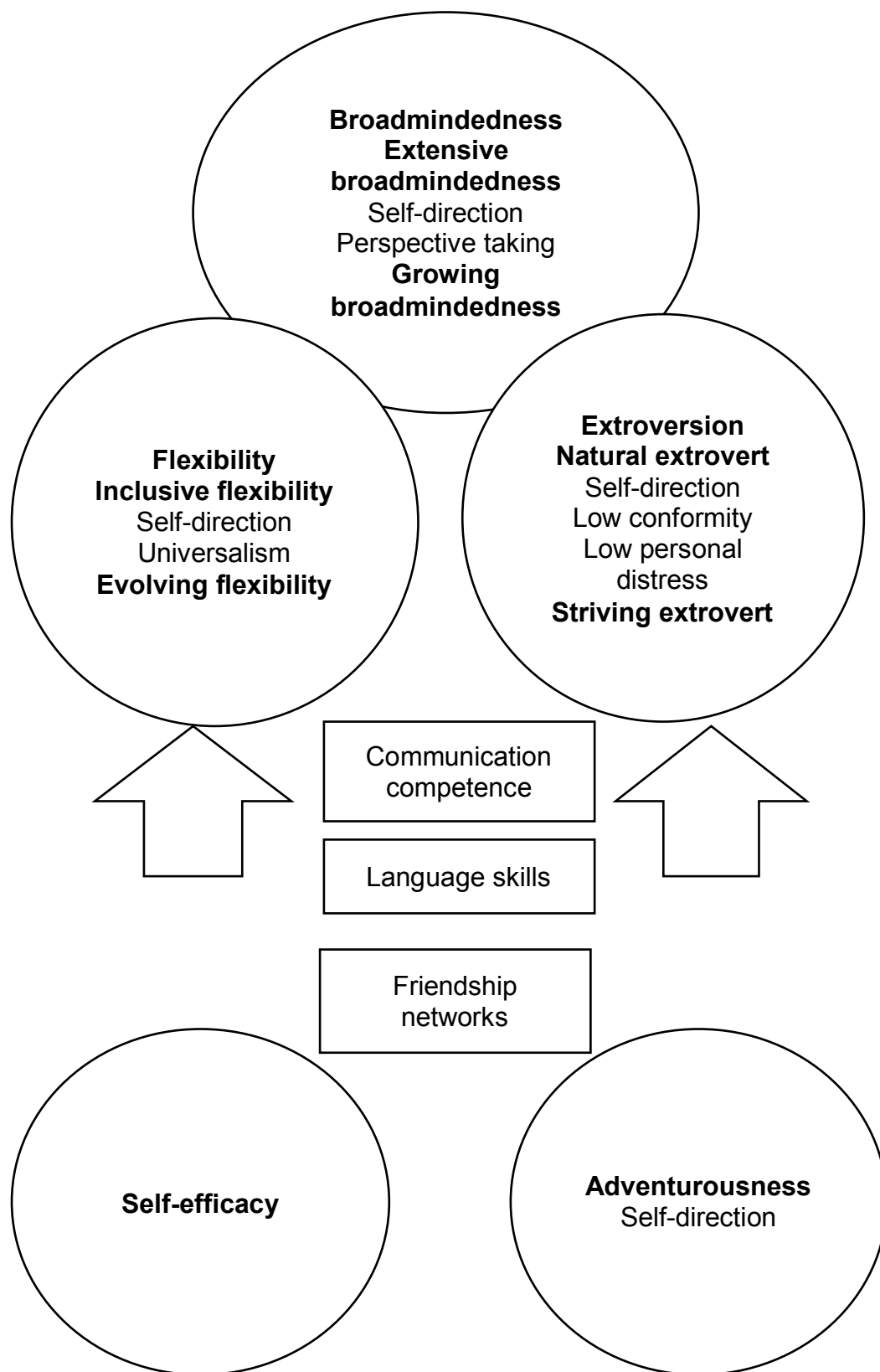


Figure 1 Model of adaptation to a multicultural environment

10.5 THE COMPONENTS OF ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

I will conclude the results with a review of factors that were discovered to have aided adaptation to a multicultural environment. These issues are retrieved from both the results of dimensions as well as of types, and from both phases of the study. They represent the components of adaptation on a practical level. Special attention is paid to the highly multicultural nature of the environment and its impact on how these factors have had an effect on adaptation.

10.5.1 THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

The motivation toward change in order to adapt proved to be a crucial factor behind major components of adaptation. The first component is what I have named here the *broadmindedness* dimension. A person who is motivated to change is more willing to have an *open mind* towards the variety one sees in a multicultural environment. With an open mind the *knowledge of cultural differences* grows and one learns to understand *multiple perspectives* concerning different issues and habits. The motivation toward change can also be seen behind another crucial component, *flexibility*. Learning from experience and *adapting one's behaviour* to varying situations and settings is emphasized in a multicultural environment, where the meanings of gestures, words and manners vary from one situation to another. *Tolerance of ambiguity* is also highlighted especially due to multicultural nature of the environment, as well as *discretion*. As one is in contact with manifold cultures and ways of life, these two qualities or competencies are needed for smooth cohabitation as well as for minimizing the conflicts in one's own life.

The motivation toward change requires *active extrovert behaviour*, both in learning *communication skills*, and in creating social networks. As one learns the required communication skills in a multicultural environment, this also facilitates successful flexible behaviour. Flexibility here denotes both behavioural change from one situation to another, and discretion as well as self-regulation when facing the unanticipated or unknown. Building *social networks* provides a route to both *social support* and the opportunities to widen one's cultural knowledge. Multicultural social networks proved to be especially fruitful in cultural understanding, but knowledge sharing in friendship networks with one's own countrymen also provided useful information to individuals. *Language learning* of the country was connected to this whole. Knowledge of the language of the country facilitated both everyday social encounters and the building of social networks, and through these widening one's own perspective to see others' points of views. It was noticeable that for some English was sufficient while for others it was not. In

general one can conclude that in multicultural Brussels at least a basic knowledge of French or Flemish helps facilitate the adaptation, even though exceptions do exist. On the other hand, many participants regarded their lack of language knowledge of the country as the major impeding or complicating factor in the adaptation process.

In conclusion, within these widely recognized prerequisites for adaptation three factors turned out to be especially important in a multicultural environment: first, an open mind and consequently the ability to understand and see life from others' perspectives; second, flexible behaviour and self-regulation; and third, active extrovert behaviour. As the population in the Brussels region is highly multicultural, especially the first two competencies are highlighted. Nevertheless, the factors discussed form a whole where an underlying positive motivation toward change is a prerequisite for successful adaptation, and a crucial component behind many of these factors. (Figure 8.)

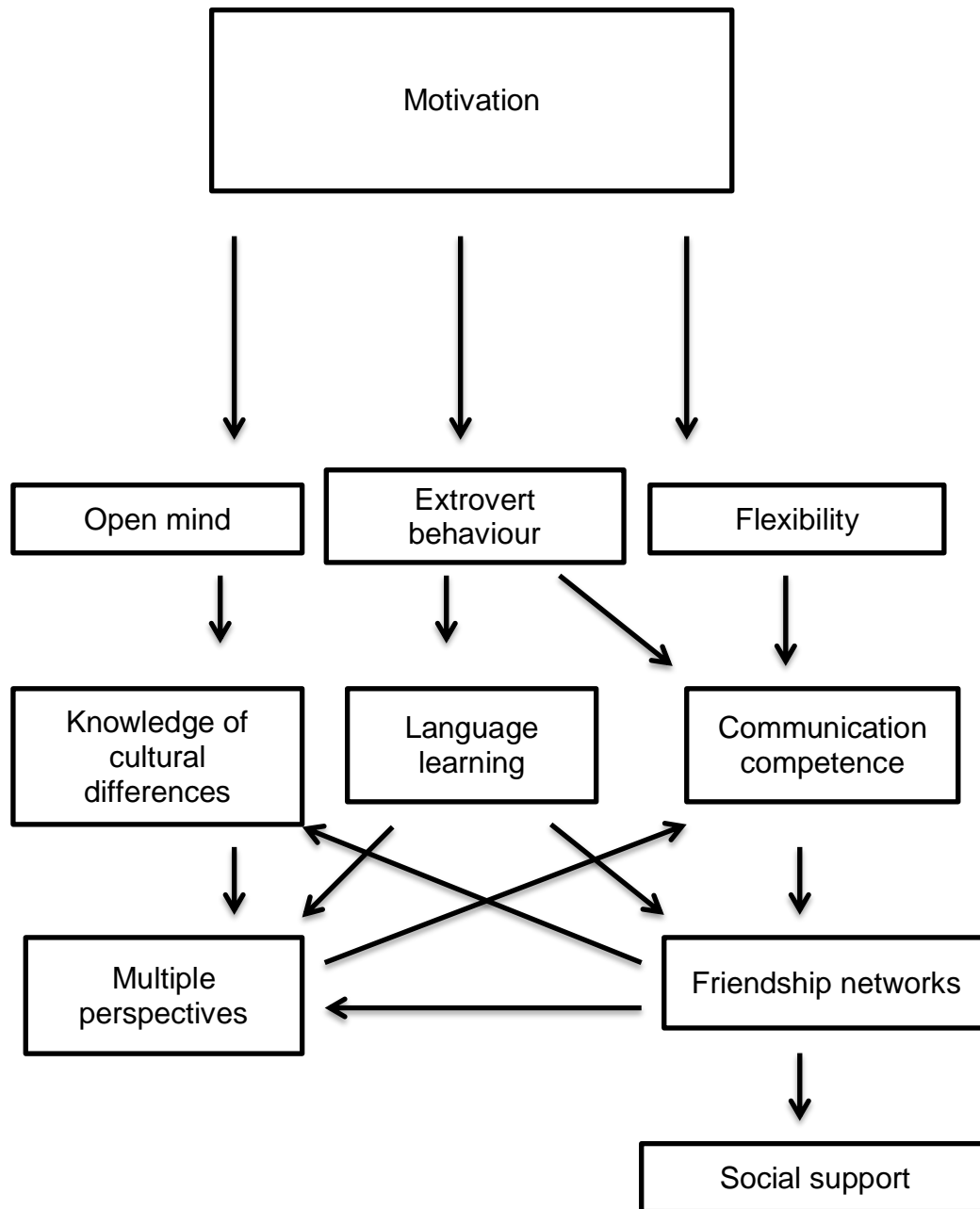


Figure 8 The basic components of adaptation to a multicultural environment

10.5.2 ADDITIONAL FACTORS IN ADAPTATION

In addition to the factors already discussed, several further issues emerged. These too have an influence on adaptation to varying degrees, depending on the person and the situation.

Self-efficacy. Belief in one's capabilities had a positive effect on adaptation. An interesting finding was that self-efficacy had increased with some individuals even though they felt they had failed to adapt. Nevertheless, in most cases self-efficacy was connected to successful adaptation.

Adventurous mind. Some individuals mentioned the adventurousness and its effect on adaptation. An adventurous mind turned out to help in adaptation, since it denotes curiosity, excitement and challenge, all qualities that drive people to find out about new issues and contexts.

Workload. Quite a few individuals in this study took up the issue of excessive workload. It was considered to have an effect on social relationships in particular, since with long working hours individuals have no time for relationships outside work. Free time was minimal for some, and this delayed the building of social networks. On the other hand, a multicultural work environment clearly assisted in gaining the skills needed in a multicultural environment, namely communication competence, new perspectives and flexible behaviour.

Spousal support and family cohesion were mentioned as factors that facilitated psychological well-being, spousal support also being a source of sharing cultural knowledge and practical information in order to cope.

Distant social relationships were widely discussed and were considered an important source of social support. Those who had other social networks in the place of settlement also regarded them as significant, but for those who had not managed to build satisfying networks in Brussels these contacts were highlighted.

Years spent abroad. The length of the assignment abroad and how long one has lived abroad altogether had a particular meaning in a multicultural environment. Even though daily life demands, such as administrative issues and daily routines like supermarket visits can be learned as easily as in a homogeneous environment, the variety of cultures living in Brussels sets different demands on understanding the surrounding life. Here the time spent abroad facilitates the adaptation probably more than in monocultural environments. **Previous experiences** of living abroad include into this whole.

11 DISCUSSION

The main aim of this dissertation was to investigate adaptation to a multicultural environment by studying Finnish expatriates and expatriate spouses residing in Brussels and its surroundings. I first inquired what kinds of dimensions of adaptation, as well as other factors affecting adaptation, could be retrieved from the qualitative data. By dimensions I denoted the characteristics and attributes the individuals either possessed or learned, and that are needed in adaptation. The dimensions were drawn together connecting similar codes, so that each dimension was formed of several subcategories under it. More practical issues connected to adaptation, such as language ability and friendship networks, were uncovered and studied as well. The second aim was to find different types of adaptation. Types of adaptation were formed seeking major similarities and differences between the interviews until coherent groups were formed. The types in this study describe different prototypes of adaptation, distinguishing the main features between the types. And third, I inquired into values and empathy, and their interconnections with different aspects of adaptation. Correlations between the dimensions, types and other converted data were examined as well.

Mixed methods were used in my analysis. Different aspects of adaptation were first retrieved from the qualitative data. Values and empathy were investigated using a survey. The qualitative data was converted into numbers and studied using statistical methods together with the value and empathy survey, in order to gain further information on the topic of adaptation. When drawing together the results of both the qualitative and quantitative analyses I used the qualitative information to interpret and contextualize the quantitative findings.

Regarding the results of this study, the dimensions of adaptation can be compared to studies in the current literature. The multicultural personality dimensions (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001) are the main reference approach here. The results are also compared to Schwartz's (1992) theory of individual values and Davis's (1994) model of empathy, and, when applicable, to other studies that have combined values or empathy with adaptation. I will also bring up here some values and aspects of empathy that could be retrieved from the interviews, even though they were not found in the statistical analysis. Instead, the types of adaptation do not have a counterpart in current adaptation literature.²⁰ Therefore, the theories of adaptation that were introduced in the theoretical part, are discussed alongside the results of this study in general, and their similarities and differences are discussed.

²⁰ Several studies were conducted in the 1950s, where different types of adjustment were represented (e.g. Bennett, Bassin & McKnight, 1958; Sewell & Davidsen, 1956). Since the time gap between these studies and present is substantial, I have decided not to make comparisons with my own study.

11.1 THE DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTATION IN THIS STUDY, AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE CURRENT LITERATURE

The dimensions found in the interviews have a strong resemblance to all well-known adaptation theories. Yet there are some interesting features that could be distinguished in the dimensions that are not discussed in general in current literature.

11.1.1 BROADMINDEDNESS

In the converted data broadmindedness was divided into growing and extensive broadmindedness. Whereas growing broadmindedness represents open mindedness and a willingness to understand different ways of life, extensive broadmindedness described further the ability to take the perspective of others. In statistical analyses the extensive broadmindedness group scored significantly higher on self-direction and perspective taking than the growing broadmindedness. Perspective taking is quite logical here, since this was the actual criterion how this dimension was divided into two separate categories according to texts. Self-direction values also fit well to the concept of extensive broadmindedness. Consistent with this finding, Sagiv & Schwartz (1995) found that self-direction and readiness for out-group contact were related. Their description about this connection would also fit well to the definition of extensive broadmindedness, namely independence of thought and readiness for “exposure to new and different ways of life and opportunities to learn about and explore them” (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995, 440). And third, age also correlated with extensive broadmindedness. One could presume that the ability to be broadminded grows with age and experiences, also alluding to a process from growing to extensive broadmindedness.

Regarding some attributes in broadmindedness, empathic concern (Davis, 1994) could also be distinguished in the responses, even though it did not appear in the statistical analysis. Individuals who actually had closer contact with the poorer districts of Brussels were deeply affected by these experiences. Some respondents also told about similar incidents and their effect on them while living in other countries before Belgium. In all these stories empathic concern was present, and their effect in the respondents' lives was obvious. Both perspective taking and empathic concern have been associated in former studies with more tolerant and less punitive attitudes towards members of out-groups (Sheenan et al., 1989). The quotes concerning broadmindedness which described understanding towards other cultures and sympathy in situations when the respondents had encountered people with hard lives reflected well both empathic concern and perspective taking as defined by Davis (1994).

In the MPQ, multicultural personality questionnaire (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001), the factors open-mindedness and cultural empathy both resemble the dimension that I have named broadmindedness. Open-mindedness was often mentioned as such in the responses. Since the interviews were conducted in Finnish, there is a slight difference in shade what the respondents actually said. Broadmindedness mentioned in the interviews is in Finnish ‘avarakatseisuus’ and ‘avartuminen’, and this is the term most often used by the respondents. Next in frequency came the word ‘suvaitsevaisuus’, translated as tolerance. Broadmindedness as a whole refers very closely to the same issue as Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven’s (2001) open-mindedness, but with the empathy aspects of cultural empathy included. Extensive broadmindedness in the conversion phase takes the definition further, referring also to the cognitive abilities of perspective taking, which are quite similar to MPQ’s cultural empathy. As can be recalled from the theoretical section, open-mindedness and cultural empathy in the original theory of the MPQ formed a single factor (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), but were later distinguished as separate dimensions. Now, in my qualitative study of Finnish expatriates, broadmindedness entails two categories on a bipolar continuum where these two MPQ factors overlap.

Concerning adaptation theories in general, it is easy to see similarities with broadmindedness. For example, Ward and Kennedy’s (1999) first factor of sociocultural adaptation describing “understanding local perspectives, values, and world views” (p.670) resembles extensive broadmindedness, as well as Church’s (1982) “increased ability to view problems from multiple perspectives” (p. 558). In earlier studies this was often referred to as international-mindedness (see Church, 1982 for review). While in some studies the ability to take the perspective of others is emphasized, in other studies the subject is discussed under the concept of open-mindedness (e.g. Ang et al., 2006; Arthur & Bennett, 1995). What makes it interesting in this study of Brussels expatriates are the different sections of which it is composed throughout the interviews, and how it can be seen to have formed and evolved. There is another interesting detail I discovered concerning broadmindedness: In most theories concerning adaptation to a foreign environment communication competence is seen as a crucial factor in socio-cultural adaptation. Even though I do not argue with this, I would like to draw attention to the fact that mere exposure to the diverse ways of life has an effect on individuals as such, and I refer here to individuals who discussed broadmindedness without referring to closer communication and social relationships. As mentioned earlier, broadmindedness entails the subcategory that describes the ability to understand differing manners, an ability that some respondents had acquired to some degree by mere observation, without closer personal contact with other cultures.

11.1.2 FLEXIBILITY

In conversion analysis this dimension was divided into two categories. Evolving flexibility described reserved flexibility, including coerced flexible behaviour, sometimes without understanding the need for it. Inclusive flexibility, by contrast, described internalized flexibility and the ability to be flexible in new and unknown situations without feeling unease. The dimensionality from one pole to another was described in the qualitative analysis within each subcategory. The statistical analysis revealed that those accentuating inclusive flexibility scored significantly higher on self-direction and universalism than those accentuating evolving flexibility. This is consistent with the distinction between the two groups. As can be recalled, the shared motivational orientation of universalism and self-direction is: "Both express reliance upon one's own judgment and comfort with the diversity of existence" (Schwartz, 1996, 4). This accurately describes the content of inclusive flexibility. In addition, inclusive flexibility also correlated significantly with years spent abroad as well as with age. Yet age and years spent abroad did not correlate with each other. So the respondents who belonged to the group of inclusive flexibility were older than those accentuating evolving flexibility. Individuals in the inclusive flexibility group had also lived significantly longer abroad than those accentuating evolving flexibility. These results once more give a reason to propose that this could be a process, where evolving flexibility precedes inclusive flexibility. The contents of the dichotomy support this proposition. In the evolving flexibility group the respondents discussed flexibility and how it is important and even indispensable in a multicultural environment, but behavioural unease was still present. Instead, in inclusive flexibility the relaxation of being flexible and enjoyment of the opportunities it brings in life especially when living in a multicultural environment like Brussels were apparent. The finding that most respondents who belonged to the inclusive flexibility group were also in the extensive broadmindedness group also supports this description. As can be recalled, in qualitative analysis the close connection between flexibility and broadmindedness was evident. Especially increase in broadmindedness could be seen as affecting flexibility. A little over a third of the inclusive flexibility group also mentioned adventure. This will be dealt with the adventurousness dimension later, since the result is more illuminating for that dimension than flexibility.

The dimension flexibility retrieved from the interviews resembles in part the flexibility factor of the multicultural personality (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001). One difference between the two is that in the MPQ the dimension flexibility also contains the factor adventurousness. Adventure was also found in the interviews, but it formed a distinctive dimension from flexibility in the texts. In the present study the core definition of both

flexibility and adventurousness would have been distorted had they been combined.

Tolerance of ambiguity is included in the flexibility dimension of the MPQ, as well being an aspect of flexibility in the present study. This is also where emotional stability, or the opposite of Davis's (1994) personal distress can be easily distinguished in the quotes. Descriptions about how one has learned not to get nervous even though things do not always run the way one is used to were related to tolerance of ambiguity. The same issues are broadly described in other adaptation theories as well. For example, in Arthur & Bennett's (1995) research emotional stability and flexibility form a single factor flexibility/adaptability, whereas in Matsumoto and colleagues' (2001) ICAPS scale, flexibility and emotional regulation are separate factors. Ruben (1976) defined seven dimensions of communication competence in intercultural adaptation, where one of the dimensions is tolerance of ambiguity. According to Ruben (1976) tolerance of ambiguity entails the ability to control personal discomfort when adapting to a new environment. This definition has a strong resemblance to the self-regulation ability I retrieved from my qualitative data.

An interesting addition to flexibility found in the texts was the subcategory discretion. Even expatriates with years of experience brought this up, namely the need for caution when confronting a new situation. It may be subsumed in the adaptation theories but it is not generally discussed. It was nevertheless part of the flexibility dimension derived from the interviews and deepens our understanding of how flexibility is formed. Discretion is in fact a subcategory of tolerance of ambiguity, and refers to one way of handling ambiguous situations. I propose that discretion was brought up in this study especially due to the multicultural nature of the environment. It could be a more important ability concerning adaptation when several cultures reside together than when adapting to a monocultural environment.

Yet another interesting concept to be discussed here is Cultural frame shifting (e.g. Hong et al., 2000; Benet-Martinez et al., 2002; Benet-Martinez et al., 2006). Cultural frame shifting, the ability to shift between cultural lenses, is in fact close to the combination of flexibility and broadmindedness in my study of Brussels expatriates. As mentioned before, they were often described together by respondents, describing at length the way one has learned to see things in another way (broadmindedness), and act in a manner required by the situation (flexibility).

11.1.3 EXTROVERSION

The third dimension, extroversion also showed a twofold tendency in the texts. Some respondents felt it natural to be extrovert and others explained they had needed to learn to behave in extrovert manner. This dichotomy was also done to the responses in conversion mixed data analysis. The statistical

analyses shed light on this distinction, and supported the features found in the qualitative analyses. Starting with values, natural extroverts scored significantly higher on self-direction and significantly lower on conformity than striving extroverts. Natural extroverts were more at ease with going out and getting to know people, acting like in the definition of self-direction: “Independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring” (Schwartz, 1992). Natural extroverts, as the name suggests, felt it easy and natural to be open to new social relationships and also behaved accordingly. The opposite pole in Schwartz’s circular continuum entails conformity, which again refers to obedience to norms. The low scores on conformity among natural extroverts could point to the ability to see past the conventions one has learned before, and in this way facilitate communication with other cultures. The significantly lower score on personal distress further supports this understanding of natural extroverts. They experienced less distress and discomfort in interpersonal situations, being naturally more socially competent than striving extroverts and more at ease in communication situations with other cultures. This is also in line with the results that personal distress is connected to higher social dysfunction and lower social competencies (Davis, 1983). Other aspects of Davis’s (1983, 1994) empathy model could not be directly found in the extrovert dimension dichotomies. Instead, extrovert action was often described as leading to new perspectives through social relationships. Interviewees in fact explained that extrovert behaviour led to an increased perspective taking ability, both with striving and natural extroverts. This description could frequently be found in the interview texts.

To add to the portrayal, natural extroverts were found significantly more often to have multicultural friendship networks and better language abilities than striving extroverts. These two variables complete the picture of natural extroverts. When one feels at ease making new acquaintances with people from other nationalities, it follows that contacts are made. Language ability is understandably an asset here, but it could also be said that those who are natural extroverts are also motivated to learn other languages in order to be able to make acquaintances. As already discussed in the qualitative phase, those who felt it is easy to build new friendship networks with other nationalities did themselves point out that “language is the key”. So to them language ability is the means to behave as they feel (extrovert) and to gain what they need (new friendships networks).

When looking at the literature of adaptation theories, it is evident that the dimension I have named extroversion is present in every one of them, albeit the emphasis varies from one theory to another. The extroversion dimension in this study partly resembles the definition of the culture learning approach: communication competence and language learning, leading to socio-cultural adaptation (Masgoret & Ward, 2006). In Hammer et al.’s (1978) dimensions of intercultural effectiveness two of the three dimensions are the ability to

communicate effectively and the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, hence dividing the issue into two dimensions. In Mendenhall and Oddou's (1985) dimensions of expatriate acculturation the second dimension is the others-oriented dimension, which entails both "relationship development" and the "willingness to communicate" (p.41). The MPQ's (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001) factor social initiative is very much the same as the extroversion dimension of Brussels expatriates. The MPQ social initiative has also been found to correlate with the Big Five extraversion (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), so the basic idea of being extrovert and successfully building social relationships, including the ability of communication skills, is present in several theories, as well as in this study of Brussels expatriates.

Coming back to striving extroverts, a few points should be mentioned. Even though they did differ significantly from natural extroverts on several factors, there were also striving extroverts with multicultural friendship networks and proficient language skills. In the qualitative phase it has already been mentioned that striving extroverts felt it more effortful to act in an extrovert manner but that it was nevertheless possible to succeed. So not being a natural extrovert does not mean one could not succeed like the naturals, and the dichotomy of striving – natural extroverts does not illustrate a process but two different forms of extrovert behaviour. This distinction is not seen in quantitative studies, so it is unknown if successful striving extroverts would be coded as extroverts or introverts in quantitative studies. One could suppose this depends on the questions asked when defining the extroversion.

Yet another factor possibly connected to the extroversion dimension was the finding that striving extroverts were much more likely than natural extroverts to mention increased self-efficacy (54% of striving extroverts compared to 25% of natural extroverts). This could point to the possibility that as one strives to be extrovert one gains mastery experiences when succeeding, and self-efficacy grows as a result. This could be seen in the texts especially in descriptions of self-efficacy. The finding that the striving extrovert and self-efficacy were related could indicate to the process of striving extroverts consciously learning to become extrovert. The texts support this deduction, with descriptions of conscious decisions to act in an extrovert manner even though it was not felt to be innate and effortless, and in this way being able to make social contacts, which in turn leads to a feeling of success and self-efficacy. Black et al. (1991) have previously suggested a similar connection. They proposed that self-efficacy "drives individual to persist in exhibiting new behaviors which, in turn, would facilitate degree of adjustment" (Black et al., 1991, 308). The authors connected the conscious effort of new behaviours to self-efficacy, and consequently to success in understanding the required behaviour in a new environment. This proposition comes close to what I found in the qualitative phase and was supported by the correlation of striving extrovert and self-efficacy in my converted analysis.

11.1.4 SELF-EFFICACY

Bandura (1977, 1997) divided the source of self-efficacy into four categories: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal. Of these, mastery experiences could be found in the interviews as a source of self-efficacy, and learning to control emotional arousal was an ability which led to mastery experiences for some. In the interview there was no question referring to self-efficacy, but 40% of the respondents brought the topic up. Had it been asked more directly, the concept could have been analysed in more detail. Now the only possible way to divide the responses in the conversion phase was to code whether it had been mentioned or not, and consequently the dichotomy did not illuminate much. The above-mentioned connection to striving extroverts was the only significant finding in the conversion phase. However, in the qualitative analysis the dimension self-efficacy was well connected to several dimensions, e.g. helping to be more extrovert, helping to see different perspectives as one becomes more at ease with handling different situations, and learning to be more flexible. In numerous adaptation theories self-efficacy is regarded as a key feature in successful adaptation (e.g. Black et al., 1991; Hechanova et al., 2003; MacNab & Worthley, 2011; Mak & Tran, 2001; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). For instance Black et al. (1991) have claimed that self-efficacy is the underlying issue behind successful intercultural relations as well as in understanding the behaviour of others in a new cultural environment. This is much the same as what I found in the qualitative analysis of most of the individuals who brought self-efficacy up. However, there were a few participants who said that their belief in their own abilities had grown abroad despite their unsuccessful adaptation. This is noteworthy, and raises a question about the different aspects to which self-efficacy may be connected. As with most respondents self-efficacy was connected to successful adaptation, to some it seemed to be a way to believe in oneself, and was unrelated to adaptation. This in turn could be connected to motivation. If there was no motivation to adapt, self-efficacy was merely connected to feelings of self-respect despite failure in a foreign environment. On the other hand, the belief that one succeeds in actions one is performing clearly motivated others to adapt. For instance, MacNab & Worthley (2011) showed in their study of cultural intelligence and self-efficacy that self-efficacy was a crucial ingredient in all three components of cultural intelligence. The components are cognitive, *motivation*, and behaviour.

Mastery experiences are regarded in many adaptation theories as the major factor influencing self-efficacy and successful adaptation, but in the multicultural personality questionnaire (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001) there is no such separate factor as self-efficacy. In the MPQ, social initiative entails a subcategory “orientation to action”, which was defined by the authors as “the courage to take action or to make things happen” (ibid., 279). This idea, with virtually the same words, could be found in the

interviews describing the *growth* of self-efficacy. In the MPQ (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001) self-efficacy can also be seen as being included in the emotional stability factor, as the resemblance to Bandura's ability to control emotional arousal is obvious. In this study of Brussels expatriates self-efficacy could be retrieved from the texts and it did form a distinct dimension of its own.

What is interesting and not often mentioned in the quantitative cross-cultural studies (with the exception of Milsten, 2005) is the feature of self-efficacy *developing* when living abroad, and even more so, developing despite the level of success of adaptation in general. Belief in oneself and one's abilities was felt to be an important factor among those who mentioned it. Preparedness to fend for oneself was connected to this among some of these respondents. Its importance to those who described it was obvious. From the data it is nevertheless impossible to deduce with certainty if it affects all people or not. Nor can I say anything of the initial level of self-efficacy before moving abroad. One can speculate that it is something that has more importance to some (those who brought it up without asking) than others (if the topic was not brought up), and that for some it is closely connected to other dimensions of adaptation while there are also individuals to whom increased self-efficacy is the major benefit they receive when living abroad. Since the subject was nevertheless brought up in all types without prompting from the interviewer, this could indicate its general importance.

Regarding values, none of the values predicted the mentioning of self-efficacy. This is understandable, since the growth of self-efficacy refers to one's feelings of ability to cope and manage successfully in various situations and therefore it is conceptually different from values. One could speculate though if the growth of self-efficacy has some link to value change: as one's belief in one's capabilities grows, this could lead to seeing new possibilities in the world around one. However, the results of this study do not cover this subject.

11.1.5 ADVENTUROUSNESS

The fifth dimension, adventurousness, was, like self-efficacy, mentioned by some but not by all. 23% of the respondents brought this subject and its significance in the adaptation up. Like self-efficacy, adventurousness was not asked in any way during the interview. Adventurousness represents challenge, curiosity, excitement, and openness to change. Life is seen as an adventure, where moving and living abroad (even after a number of years) provides challenge and interesting content to life. Those who talked about adventure, scored significantly higher on the self-direction value (Schwartz, 1992) than those who did not. This, again, is in line with the definition of adventurousness described above.

Regarding Davis's (1994) empathy model, the dimension adventurousness could be seen as something individuals with high personal distress do not possess. An adventurous person would presumably not be so ill at ease in stressful situations, so one could presume that there would be a negative correlation between these two issues. This correlation, however, was not found in conversion analysis. One reason for this could be the small sample size and in particular the minority in this sample that brought the adventurousness up.

In the MPQ adventurousness is included into the flexibility factor and defined as: "a tendency to actively search and explore new situations and to regard them as challenge" (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 294). This is similar to the dimension adventure described by the respondents in this study, but unlike in the MPQ, here the dimension adventurousness formed a dimension of its own. As mentioned earlier, inclusive flexibility correlated with adventurousness. However, conceptually these two were distinct, since the descriptions of adventurousness gave an impression of a quality possessed by some but not all, referring also to a quality or a trait of a more permanent kind, whereas flexibility was clearly a developing competence and something that changed and grew. Furthermore, in the interviews adventurousness was also linked to broadmindedness and extroversion dimensions. Expatriates with an adventurous mind were often curious and therefore had good grounds for broadening their minds as they actively sought new experiences. This quality was also connected to active extrovert behaviour. One could also deduct from the texts that having an adventurous spirit helped in becoming more flexible as one seeks new experiences with an open mind.

Apart from Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven's (2001) multicultural personality questionnaire, adventurousness is usually not mentioned or studied in cross-cultural theories. This is an interesting detail, since I found that adventurousness formed a dimension of its own, despite the fact that it was not discussed by all participants. A possible explanation for this could be *what* is studied. For decades the emphasis in cross-cultural studies has been on shock (Oberg, 1960) or stress (e.g. Berry, 2006b), and consequently the core of such studies has been on difficulties confronted in cross-cultural encounters. Adventurousness does not fit into this line of investigation and may not be brought up due to this. Furthermore, the target group of my study, i.e. highly skilled expatriates, is different from many cross-cultural studies, where immigrants are well represented. Adventurousness is possibly more relevant to those individuals who move and live in a financially secure situation. Nevertheless, even in the studies of expatriates, adventurousness is rarely brought up.

11.2 FACTORS FACILITATING AND INHIBITING ADAPTATION

In this study individuals who had not adapted were in a minority. One can speculate whether this is due to the fact that those who did not adapt would be more reluctant to take part in this kind of study, or whether such individuals would in general leave prematurely and would therefore no longer be expatriates (or expatriate spouses), or whether Finns in general adapt well to this kind of environment. I will review the components of adaptation found in this study in addition to dimensions, and discuss both the factors that were seen to be the main reasons inhibiting adaptation as well as those that facilitated the process. Some of these issues could be found separate from the dimensions, whereas others were included in them. The connections of these issues to current theories are also discussed.

11.2.1 TIME SPENT LIVING ABROAD

The time spent abroad is unquestionably an important factor in adaptation to foreign environments. The time the respondents in this study had spent abroad was on average 6.5 years at the time of the interview. Most respondents had lived abroad before moving to Belgium. There was an allusion that the timeline for ideal adaptation could well be years rather than months, at least in order to gain a solid competence to cope and feel at ease in a multicultural environment. The internalization of different ways to communicate and understand varying communication styles as well as understanding values and thoughts different from one's own cannot be learned overnight. Judging from the interviews it would seem more like a process of several years, perhaps a never-ending process. As many interviewees described, living abroad is "an eternal path where you always learn more". In cross-cultural adaptation studies in general the time spent abroad is not discussed unless the timeline is the actual subject of the study (e.g. Ward et al., 1998), and the study is longitudinal. A substantial proportion of cross-cultural adaptation studies are conducted with students, who may only stay for a year or a few years at the most. In studies of expatriates and expatriate spouses the respondents have often stayed abroad for several years (e.g. Ali et al., 2003; Harrison et al., 1996; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2003), but in the research itself the effect of time, as well as age is neglected. Spini, Elcheroth and Figini (2009) have criticized social psychological publications for these same reasons. They reviewed 699 empirical social psychological studies published around 2000 and concluded that most studies were carried out on student samples and did not in general include time- or age-related explanatory variables (Spini et al., 2009). It seems to me that the same can be said about cross-cultural adaptation studies. Even though my study is not

longitudinal, I decided to focus on the number of years spent abroad, since both qualitative and quantitative analysis indicated its importance in contemplating the process of adaptation. I also discovered that age was linked to broadmindedness and flexibility dimensions. Those in the extensive broadmindedness group were older than the ones in the growing broadmindedness; and those in the inclusive flexibility group were significantly older than those in the evolving flexibility group.

Some remarks are in order about the time spent abroad by respondents who had not adapted. As mentioned before, these individuals had only been abroad on average two years, considerably less than individuals in other types. Though there were individuals in the ambiguously adapting and in the positively adapting groups with equally little experience of living abroad, in general this group had less experience of living abroad than others. If these individuals were to stay longer abroad, at least some of them might adapt better in time. The predefined length of posting can also play a role here. Take, for example, language ability. If one knows one is soon leaving, there is no time and maybe no motivation to learn the language. Nor is it so necessary to make friends, knowing one has to soon leave them behind. It is the question of impermanence and how one regards it, or in other words, motivation. Furthermore, I have no records of individuals who may have stayed only a short period and left prematurely due to adaptation problems. Therefore the question whether those who do not adapt are as few as in this study must be left unanswered.

11.2.2 COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

The understanding of everyday social encounters, different ways of life and varying communication styles were seen as growing and being learned by the respondents. These are all important factors in a multicultural environment, where the ways to behave and comprehend life vary from one culture to another. Communication competence was connected to broadmindedness, flexibility, and extroversion dimensions. Self-efficacy was also connected to communication competence with most of those who spoke of self-efficacy. In broadmindedness communication competence could be seen as part of *understanding* the communication, both language, and the meanings of expressions as well as gestures in everyday social encounters, and in a broader sense differences between cultures. In flexibility communication competence refers to the ability to *behave* correctly in various situations with different cultures. In the extroversion dimension, communication competence refers to *active* behaviour in order to make friends and make the daily life function. Furthermore, the growth of self-efficacy was described by some to give courage and in time lead to communication competence. Language ability is clearly part of overall communication competence, and is connected to this

whole. As can be recalled, sociocultural adaptation describes the ability to manage one's daily life in a new cultural milieu, the acquisition of culturally appropriate skills, and the ability to interact smoothly (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). This definition has a close resemblance to the concept of communication competence described above.

Communication competence is a central concept in cross-cultural adaptation studies. Some theories have been developed exclusively around it, for instance Gudykunst and his colleagues' (e.g. Gudykunst, 1993; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001) anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory and Gardner's (1962) universal communicator. In some theories it has been one of the basic building blocks, like in Hammer et al.'s (1978) dimensions of intercultural effectiveness, where it is one of the three dimensions. Furthermore, in most theories it is part of several factors or dimensions like in this study of Brussels expatriates. Different aspects of adaptation are intertwined with communication competence in these theories. For instance, Black et al. (1991) have highlighted the role of self-efficacy in intercultural adjustment through both intercultural relations as well as in understanding the behaviour of others. In Mendenhall & Oddou's (1985) dimensions of expatriate acculturation the second dimension is the others-oriented dimension. This dimension consists of two subfactors: relationship development and the willingness to communicate, both referring to communication competence among other things, such as language fluency and friendship relationships (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985).

11.2.3 LANGUAGE SKILLS

Proficiency in the language of the country was brought up on several occasions, and the general impression was the better the knowledge of either language of the country, the better the adaptation. This was connected to several issues: the ability to build multicultural friendship networks; the possibility of learning to understand different ways of life and different worldviews; social skills beyond language; and everyday communication issues, ranging, for example, from one's trip to the local supermarket to dealing with administrative affairs at a municipality office. Language knowledge of the country is acknowledged in practically all cross-cultural adaptation studies, and especially in studies of socio-cultural adaptation. Masgoret & Ward (2006) have defined foreign language proficiency and communication competence as being at the core of socio-cultural adaptation. These two provide effective intercultural interaction, which is part of socio-cultural adaptation. Language proficiency and intercultural interpersonal interaction have as well been proven to correlate in earlier studies (e.g. Church, 1982; Masgoret, 2005; Ward & Kennedy, 1993b). But in the multicultural environment of Brussels there were also individuals who had

adapted well without the language skills of the country (though they were fluent in another foreign language, namely English). For some the inability to speak French or Flemish had led them to build social networks with other Finns, while others had built multicultural social circles with English-speaking people. Regarding daily life, while some felt it effortful to cope with deficient language ability, others seemed to get along well despite the lack of language knowledge of French or Flemish. Here again, the component affecting the significance of language knowledge is motivation. If one has little or no motivation to change and adapt, it has an effect on the motivation to learn the language as well. On the other hand, if one is motivated to adapt, the defective language ability is not an insurmountable issue in adaptation. Furthermore, even a fluent language knowledge of the country does not suffice if the motivation toward change and adaptation in general is missing.

11.2.4 FRIENDSHIP NETWORKS AND OTHER SOURCES OF SOCIAL SUPPORT

Multicultural friendship networks were both a source of social support as well as a means to learn to see the world in different ways. Yet it was also mind-broadening to some to make contacts with their own nationality members. Information was shared about local customs and experiences along with more practical tips to cope in a foreign cultural milieu. Having friends among locals is found in former studies to be a facilitating factor in adaptation (e.g. Hendrickson, Rosen & Aune, 2011), but social support from other expatriates, either other nationality members or co-nationals, has also been regarded as important (e.g. Copeland & Norell, 2002). So if one is busy with work or children, it may be easiest to start building a network with one's own nationality members. Quite a few of the respondents in this study who socialized mainly with other Finns, regarded the situation as a convenient but temporary solution. Some talked, for example, of going to language courses and getting to know other people once the children were bigger or the workload would diminish, others had already started some hobby or language course and were hoping that this would broaden their networks. From the texts it is evident that the present situation, solely socializing with Finns, was not in general seen as negative but was instead seen as a satisfying solution in order to adapt. Many of these respondents were happy they had managed to find a circle of friends and felt that a success.

In conclusion one can say that building a social network was seen as a crucial part of adaptation, but the nature of a suitable network depended on life circumstances. A large circle of Finnish mothers and fathers at home with their small children is an attractive option in building a network of friends in a new environment. All the respondents belonging to this group had only been in Belgium for about two years, although some had lived abroad before, in

other countries. So being an extrovert does help, but one also has to ask with whom is one an extrovert at the time. However, the majority of all the respondents had an international circle of friends, which in most cases included Belgians.

Regarding friendship networks and family relations one recent feature is worth mentioning. In all the adaptation types the respondents brought up the fact that nowadays one can also keep close contacts with friends and relatives both in the home country and around the world. This is due to expanded forms of communication (Messenger, Skype, Facebook, etc.) and low-priced telephone connections. Having regular contacts with old friends and family back home was described as an important source of social support, and to some it also compensated for the failure to make new friends abroad. Distant contacts were regarded as important to both the less and the more adapted, but to some individuals these contacts were a way to relieve solitude. These contacts are not discussed in contemporary cross-cultural studies literature. This study suggests that these distant networks could well affect both the significance and the number of local social networks.

In addition to the social relations mentioned above, some respondents described social support from a spouse and closer family cohesion as creating a positive atmosphere for adaptation. Arthur and Bennett (1995) found in their study that the family situation was the most important factor contributing to the success of international assignments. Ali et al. (2003) have alike found family cohesion to be an important factor in spousal adaptation. In my study of Brussels expatriates the importance of family support to adaptation was discussed by 33% of those who lived in a relationship (with or without children). This could indicate that it has importance in this study as well.

11.2.5 STRESS AND COPING IN ADAPTATION

Psychological adaptation is usually defined in terms of stress and coping approach (Berry, 2006b; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). When reviewing the model of acculturative stress (Berry, 1997, 2006b) and comparing it to the results of the present study, the basic concepts of the model can be retrieved from the results. According to Berry (1997), the smoothest way to adapt is with *behavioural shifts* (minor psychological changes), *culture shedding* (the unlearning of aspects of one's behaviour that are no longer appropriate) and *culture conflict* (incompatible behaviours create difficulties for the individual). These could all be found in abundance especially in the flexibility dimension. Furthermore, *acculturative stress* (moderate difficulties) could also be retrieved from the interviews, especially amongst the ambiguously adapting. Although Berry has not defined in detail what acculturative stress entails, uncertainty in flexibility could well refer to

this. And with some of those who were not able to adapt, one could also find Berry's (1997) descriptions of "when changes in the cultural context exceed the individual's capabilities to cope" and the consequence "incapacitating anxiety may occur" (p.13).

Furthermore, such concepts as personal flexibility, extraversion, self-esteem, social support, and coping styles have been linked to psychological adaptation (Berry, 2006b; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). The first three refer broadly to the same issues as the dimensions in this study, and have already been discussed at length, and social support was discussed above. Therefore, I shall only review the concept of coping and the manner in which it was retrievable in the present study.

I applied the term coping in this study implying the ability to manage daily life as well as work in general in a foreign milieu. Coping was included in three dimensions: flexibility, extroversion and self-efficacy. In flexibility coping refers to the ability to behave in the way the situation requires, and to successful communication competencies in varying situations. In the extroversion dimension coping referred to success in both social relations and in general communication situations. In self-efficacy the ability to cope in different life domains had grown along with self-efficacy, being to some part of communication competence but to others mere ability to cope in basic daily affairs in a foreign milieu. Coping also divided the respondents into different types, with the ideally adapted being the most successful and the not adapted the least. The coping strategies proposed by Folkman and Lazarus (1985), i.e. problem-focused (attempts to change or solve the problem) and emotion-focused coping strategies (attempts to regulate the emotions associated with the problem), could as well be distinguished in the texts of Finnish expatriates. The descriptions how respondents in equivocal communication situations repeatedly asked the other person about the meaning until they were sure they had understood the message is an example of the problem-focused coping strategy. The tolerance of ambiguity is a good example of emotion-focused coping style.

11.2.6 CULTURAL DISTANCE AND RELATED ISSUES IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Selmer and Lauring (2009) showed that cultural similarity can be as difficult in terms of adaptation as cultural distance. In the interviews of Brussels expatriates the problematic nature of cultural similarity could clearly be seen. In particular, the quotes in the evolving flexibility group described the misunderstandings that had occurred as the respondents had presumed that routines they had learned could be applied as such in a new cultural milieu. This same issue, e.g. the superficially small but nevertheless distinctive ways of communicating were remarkably seen in the interviews of the not adapted,

but the phenomenon was discussed by expatriates in general, in all the types. Furthermore, in Brussels it is not only required to understand the everyday social encounters of the country but also the numerous cultures one is in contact with, both at work and in daily life. So the question is not just to adapt to a culture that may be culturally rather similar but to adapt to *cultures*, in plural. It depends on the individual how one perceives these differences and what courses of action one chooses. Furthermore, not only the salient differences like language, religion and habitat density cause problems in adaptation, but minor differences in meanings of the words, conventions and how the society functions in general may come as a surprise and delay understanding and adaptation. In addition, as mentioned in chapter 5.5, Belgium has a higher power distance than Finland (Hofstede, 2001, 87). This difference was noticed by interviewees especially in work environments, and also at the schools their children attended.

Ward and Chang (1997) have in their 'cultural fit proposition' highlighted that "understanding not only the host culture, but also the sojourner's relationship to it, are important factors in predicting and facilitating adaptive outcomes" (pp. 531-532). This could be clearly seen in this study of Brussels expatriates. The overall ability to understand various habits and everyday social encounters affects adaptation in general. It could be seen as a competence that is part of broadmindedness, but was linked to other dimensions as well. Whereas it can be a facilitating factor to some to have numerous cultures living mixed together, it can cause problems to others in understanding what exactly the meaning of actions is in varying situations. Unexpected behaviour in situations can be a challenge which is not easy to confront if one has no prior knowledge or experience of other cultures and their habits. On the other hand, if one is prone to keep to one's own habits, this can cause conflicts in communication as well. Especially in a highly multicultural environment like Brussels it is particularly important to pay attention to both one's own behaviour as well as to others', especially in the beginning. The communication misunderstandings are likely to occur, and again this happens more often in the beginning of the stay as one has no prior experience of unknown situations and what to expect. This leads to another issue affecting adaptation, namely expectations and prior knowledge of the country, which have been shown in former studies to have an effect on adaptation (e.g. Black et al., 1991; Masgoret, 2005). In this study of Brussels expatriates there were several comments amongst different types about wrong expectations and how this had complicated adaptation. The general prior expectation of Brussels which had led to conflicts and difficulties was that "it is like Finland, part of the Western Europe". This in particular had caused some unnecessary problems to some, thinking there are no differences between the two countries. Not only does each country have their own manners and codes of behaviour that may differ to only a small extent, but in reality this can cause misunderstandings in communication if one is not aware

of the differences. There were numerous tales of these incidents and how the respondents believed unnecessary problems could have been avoided had they had some debriefing in advance. And in Brussels it is not just the Belgian culture that should be taken into account, but also the diversity of cultures and habits in varying degrees in different situations. One way to deal with this is cautiousness in uncertain situations, which was mentioned by many respondents. Cautious behaviour was described as having been applied when necessary even after years of living abroad, and this was also mentioned a course of action by the ideally adapted.

11.3 VALUES IN ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Some values were explicitly connected to the dimensions of adaptation in this study. Self-direction in Schwartz's (1992) value theory correlated with the dimensions of extensive broadmindedness, inclusive flexibility, natural extrovert and adventurousness. The ideally adapted type also scored significantly higher on self-direction than the positively or ambiguously adapting types. It is logical to conclude that this value is particularly important in adaptation to a multicultural environment. Sagiv & Schwartz (1995) have written about the correlation between self-direction and out-group contact as follows:

"We expected a positive correlation between emphasizing self-direction values and readiness for out-group contact because such contact provides exposure to new and different ways of life and opportunities to learn about and explore them. Moreover, people who emphasize self-direction values are more likely to reject negative stereotypes or prejudices against out-groups because they prefer to make independent judgments based on their own experience."

(Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995, 440.)

This definition fits well when describing adaptation to multicultural environment, whether one is discussing types or dimensions.

Universalism was also related to inclusive flexibility. Universalism values emphasize "understanding, accepting, and showing concern for the welfare of all human beings, even those whose ways of life differ from one's own" (Schwartz, 1992), and this was also shown by Sagiv and Schwartz (1995) to correlate with willingness to out-group contact. It is understandable that this value predicts adaptation to a multicultural environment. Regarding the evolving – inclusive flexibility dichotomy the significantly higher ranking with inclusive flexibility reflects well the juxtaposition between the two forms of

flexibility. As mentioned earlier, evolving flexibility described hesitant and even reluctant flexible behaviour. This could indicate that those belonging to the evolving flexibility group acted in a flexible manner since it was required in the situation but had not internalized or accepted the reasons behind this behaviour. Based on conceptual deduction, had there been two opposite poles in the broadmindedness dimension, universalism might have been found there as well. But in my study the two categories of broadmindedness in the numerical data both describe broadmindedness, though exclusive broadmindedness described more of the perspective taking ability, while growing broadmindedness referred more closely to a willingness to be open as such. Universalism value fits well to both these poles of broadmindedness, when one compares the definition with the interview quotes.

Natural extroverts scored significantly lower on conformity than striving extroverts. Being a natural extrovert probably helps a person see beyond learned conventions, and instead of applying learned habits acting as the situation requires. The definition of conformity, “restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms” (Schwartz, 1992) does refer to behaviour that might not be the most successful mode in a foreign milieu, since the social expectations one has learned in the home country may not be applicable to other environments, and that is where the adaptability of one’s behaviour is needed. This is also in line with Sagiv and Schwartz’s (1995) arguments and results that willingness to out-group contact correlates negatively with conservation values. Contact to out-group members “places one in situation where familiar norms do not apply,” whereas conservation values (conformity, security, tradition) “emphasize the goal of preserving established arrangements” (ibid., 439).

11.3.1 VALUE CHANGE IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

As can be recalled, Bardi & Goodwin (2011) presented a model of value change applicable to cross-cultural research.²¹ Both automatic and effortful value change processes could be retrieved from the respondents’ answers. The descriptions of learning the language and through this making new friends with different nationalities and learning their ways of seeing the world (automatic route) had an effect on individuals, which, as deduced from the texts, had also changed their values. An effortful value change could be seen where the respondents described the diversity of nationalities and how they have now realized that other people can see life from a totally different perspective, and how this has made them rethink their own lives, values, habits, and customs. For instance, diminution of conformity could be retrieved from quotes describing broadmindedness. There was a plethora of

²¹ See chapter 3.2.4 for a review.

quotes where respondents explained how living abroad had made them realize that they used to be accustomed to living by certain rules, and that now they had started to rethink this conformity, as they had seen the variety abroad. Bardi and Goodwins' (2011) explanation how a new situation requires a change in behaviour, which again leads to value change, is clearly and substantially distinguishable in the interviews. Rohan (2000) has also explained value change in her article. She claimed that individuals' experiences and personal attributes guide one to view what is the best way of living to one, which also reflects on value priorities. Furthermore, as life circumstances and personal attributes change, value priorities change with them (Rohan, 2000). I propose that in the long run living in a multicultural environment is prone to change individuals' values so that enhancement of universalism and self-direction grow, and conformity and security diminish. I claim that particularly the multicultural environment is the triggering cause here. Seeing several different cultures and nationalities around on a daily bases increases an individual's appreciation of differing ways of living and one's broadmindedness in understanding people who are different from one's own culture. At the same time one learns to see the world beyond one's own habitual conventions. This process is also bound to enhance independence in thought and action. Hence the enhancement of universalism and self-direction, as well as a decline in conformity and security are all connected to each other in the adaptation process. This ranking is also congruent with the structural system of Schwartz's value model (1992, see also Bardi et al., 2009), so that high and low priority values are on opposite sides of the values circle. The expatriates had high priorities on higher order value types openness to change and self-transcendence, and low on conservation and self-enhancement. Looking at the value rank order in this study and keeping in mind that the respondents had lived abroad on average 6.5 years, the order is illuminating. Universalism was in the first rank and self-direction in second. Conformity was two steps lower with Finnish expatriates than with Finnish people with academic education in Finland. Furthermore, security was in fifth rank with Finnish expatriates, whereas in general it is in second rank in Finnish samples.

Since this is not a longitudinal study, I have no data on the value rank order before moving abroad. Therefore, the proposal of value change is uniquely based on text analysis. In case these individuals' value rank order had been somewhat akin before moving, as found in this study, that could have motivated them to move in the first place. This would be in line with Tartakovsky and Schwartz's (2001) self-development motivation to emigrate, as well as Schwartz's (2005) propositions how values can influence behaviour. According to Schwartz (2005), high-priority values (e.g. self-direction) can guide behavior (in this case moving abroad) when the opportunity occurs to achieve the goals that one values highly. One can speculate, whether these individuals who decided to move abroad valued universalism and self-

direction more and security and conformity less already before moving compared to those who stayed in their own country. That is possible, since they had made a decision to move abroad, but judging from the texts, living abroad and in a multicultural environment has strengthened this tendency. Regarding those who have not adapted, and at least some of those who were ambiguously adapting, one could speculate that they may have incongruence between their value priorities and the situation they are in. In that case the lack of motivation could be the result of this. On the other hand, the lack of motivation to change and to adapt may be due to several other factors already discussed in this thesis. Due to the small sample size detailed comparisons of value priorities between the groups were not possible, and the answers can only be speculative. As can be recalled, in statistical analysis only the ideally adapted scored significantly higher than the positively adapting and ambiguously adapting in one value, namely self-direction.

In my hypotheses, universalism and higher order values of openness to change were expected to be more important and conformity less important for the expatriate sample than for the Finnish national sample (of similar education). These hypotheses were supported by quantitative analysis, especially for universalism and self-direction. Both conformity and security were found to be lower among the expatriates in the quantitative analysis. The qualitative analysis supported alike the enhancement of universalism and self-direction, and the diminution of conformity and security among expatriates.

11.3.2 WORK VALUES OF FINNISH EXPATRIATES

In this study work values were in the third rank. This is remarkably higher rank than, for example, in the Pyhtää research in 2007 (Helkama, 2012a), where the work values were placed 7th. Even though this is not directly relevant to adaptation to a multicultural environment, it is a detail of the subject group at hand that is worth noting. In the interviews several expatriates as well as working expatriate spouses brought up the long working hours and their indirect effect on adaptation. Work is obviously a highly ranked value within this subject group, and it has a twofold effect regarding adaptation. On the one hand, lack of free time was felt to cause problems in building social networks outside work. On the other hand, numerous quotes regarding change and positive adaptation were retrievable from the texts concerning relations at work. So, in conclusion, it would seem that the high ranking of work values is more illuminating in describing the subjects of the study as such, although it has some effect regarding adaptation.

Another detail concerning work values in this study is that work values were linked to universalism and benevolence. In former studies work values have been related to achievement, power, and security in student samples (Myyry & Helkama, 2001), or to conformity, security, and tradition (e.g.

Helkama, 2012a). In the present study the work values were related to conformity and security as well, but the relation to universalism and benevolence has not been detected in other studies. One can only speculate if this is characteristic to the selected nature of the present sample, so that expatriates connect work values with higher order self-transcendence values. However, this result could also be seen to support the idea that work values are, as Schwartz has argued, included in the basic ten values, and are not an independent value. My results, then, suggest that work values were in the service of universalism, which was the top value in the expatriate sample. While the ten basic values in this study formed an integrated circular structure characteristic to Shwartz's value theory, work values deviated from this structure as well as from other studies where work values have been included.

11.4 EMPATHY IN ADAPTATION TO A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Two aspects of empathy were discovered in the statistical analysis. First, perspective taking scores were significantly higher for those belonging to extensive broadmindedness compared to the growing broadmindedness group. This result was illuminating, though expected: the dimension broadmindedness was rather abundantly present in all the interviews, so to split the dimension into two categories for numerical data, the most distinctive difference I could find was whether the discussion concerned only openness and the willingness to understand, or whether there were clear explications of perspective taking and the ability to see different points of view. In previous studies (e.g. Gibbs, Basinger, Grime & Snarey, 2007; Myyry & Helkama, 2007) perspective-taking skills have been shown to influence information processing. These findings are congruent with the correlation between extensive broadmindedness and perspective taking. The ability for perspective taking also refers closely to cultural frame shifting, i.e. the ability to shift between cultural lenses, a concept introduced by Hong et al. (2000).

Second, personal distress could be found in two comparisons. Natural extroverts scored significantly lower on personal distress than striving extroverts; in the types, the ideally adapted type scored significantly lower than the positively and ambiguously adapting type. Regarding extroverts, low personal distress in naturals as compared to striving extroverts was easy to see already in the interviews. In fact, the definitions of striving and natural extroverts are partly based on this difference. As was mentioned earlier, according to Davis (1983) those higher in personal distress are "shyer, more socially anxious and less extraverted" (p. 121). Striving extroverts fit this definition well if they are compared to natural extroverts. For them it was more effortful to act in an extrovert manner. Although personal distress did not correlate with other dimensions in this study, it does not mean that it was

not present. In qualitative analysis both flexibility and to some extent broadmindedness covered the quality of emotional stability. In flexibility the tolerance of ambiguity has a direct association with stable mind, and in broadmindedness the openness to other habits and ways of life is a quality that could be more easily adapted by those who do not become excessively stressed in social situations. In self-efficacy the ability to control emotional stress was one of the forms leading to mastery experiences, as well as the ability gained as self-efficacy increased. Regarding adventurousness, one could also presume that individuals with adventurous minds do not feel excessively anxious in social situations. It could well be that in a study with a larger sample size these connections could be found.

When studying the differences between the three types that could be compared to each other, the ideally adapted group scored significantly lower on personal distress than the positively and ambiguously adapting groups. Even though emotional stability, the inverse of personal distress, is in general regarded as a permanent character or trait, it could be that living a long time in a foreign milieu has some kind of effect on it. Alternatively, those who have low personal distress might be more willing to stay longer abroad. Emotional balance or emotional stability is one of the key factors in the literature of cross-cultural adaptation (e.g. Arthur & Bennett, 1995; Gardner, 1962; Hammer et al., 1978; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2001; Ward et al., 2004). However, whether emotional stability is a quality that could change is not generally discussed in adaptation theories. The transitional experience proposed by Adler (1975) points perhaps most clearly to the process of change in this factor. In his article, Adler (1975) described it as “process of both frustration and growth” (p.22). At a certain point nervousness, anxiety and frustration change into self-assuredness and relaxedness. When successful in a transitional experience, an individual changes through learning, self-development, and personal growth. But Adler did point out as well, that not all succeed (1975). Hammer et al. (1978) have also hypothesized that in the learning process psychological stress could be learned to be controlled. Based on the analysis of the interviews I propose that one can learn to control personal distress, at least to some extent. I return again to the qualitative data. There were numerous comments how one had learned to stay calm in situations which previously had caused stress. These examples were in various dimensions. One could learn not to become stressed when seeing the different ways of other cultures, one could behave calmly in new situations, and could learn to control one’s stress in life in general. But most likely there are also those who do not learn to control stress, and decide to leave. Consequently, only those who manage well stay long periods abroad.

11.5 VALUES AND EMPATHY IN THE CURRENT SAMPLE

In the sample of Brussels expatriates some significant correlations between values and aspects of empathy were detected.²² The most significant correlations were found between empathic concern and benevolence and universalism. These results are congruent with several previous studies (e.g. Helkama, 2004; Helkama, Myyry, Kallionpää & Riska, 2005; Myyry & Helkama, 2001; Silfver, Helkama, Lönnqvist & Verkasalo, 2008). However, perspective taking has been proven alike to correlate significantly with self-transcendence values (e.g. Helkama, 2004; Helkama et al., 2005; Silfver-Kuhlampi, 2008; Silfver et al., 2008) but this connection was not found in the expatriate sample. Conceptually, perspective taking and universalism values would correlate well with the results of this study, so it is left unanswered why there was no connection between the two. It should be remembered, though, that for statistical analysis the sample size was small, and could show only the strongest correlations. However, the negative correlation between personal distress and self-direction was significant in this study, which is incongruent with some previous studies (e.g. Silfver-Kuhlampi, 2008; Silfver et al., 2008). Personal distress is generally regarded as reflecting an inability to control stress, which is usually seen as an involuntary reaction. Therefore it has been explained to differ conceptually from conscious value priorities (Silfver et al. 2008). Based on the interviews of Brussels expatriates I proposed in the previous chapter that personal distress can also be consciously modified, at least to some extent. Consequently, the correlation with values could be understandable. I also refer to theories by Adler (1975) and Hammer et al. (1978) discussed in the previous chapter, where the possibility of learning to control stress was brought up. As can be recalled, personal distress was described in the texts as a changing quality. Perhaps those who were initially low on personal distress have nevertheless felt that this quality has strengthened while living abroad, and explained this in the interviews. It is also possible that the ability to control stress that I found in the qualitative data is slightly different from the personal distress measured using quantitative methods. Davis's (1994) personal distress may measure a trait which is rather permanent, but it can have a close connection to behavioural abilities. With those abilities a person may be able to control personal distress to some extent. Consequently, those who value self-direction highly may have better means to control personal distress, and they also score lower on personal distress than those who value less self-direction. Furthermore, the selected nature of the present sample should be taken into consideration. Life circumstances are different when living in a foreign milieu,

²² See Table 7 in chapter 9.2 for correlations.

and this could have an effect on how and why the ability to control stress was brought up. Whether it is an ability or a trait, it is crucial in cross-cultural adaptation, and therefore the respondents brought the subject up, even though none of the questions in the interview structure referred to it. Compared to the habitual life circumstances of those who live in their home country, the significance of personal distress, or the ability to control stress, is highlighted when living in a multicultural foreign milieu and, in particular, when the study concentrates on this living abroad and adaptation. These circumstances may have brought out new perspectives to the concept of personal distress.

11.6 IN CONCLUSION

Adler (1975) wrote that individuals undergo stages of transitional experiences in cross-cultural encounters, and these experiences “should result in the movement of personality and identity to new consciousness of values, attitudes, and understandings” (p. 15). He described the final stage of transition as follows: “Social, psychological, and cultural differences are accepted and enjoyed. The individual is capable of exercising choice and responsibility and able to *create* meaning for situations” (Adler, 1975, 19). I find this definition very close to what I found in this study in the ideally adapted type. Extensive broadmindedness, inclusive flexibility and successful extrovert behaviour, either natural or learned are at the core of ideal adaptation, along with a positive motivation toward change. Especially two values, self-direction and universalism, reflect ideal adaptation, and in the empathy aspects low personal distress and perspective taking are crucial ingredients. The concept cultural frame shifting proposed by Hong et al. (2000) fits as well to this portrayal of ideally adapted. The ability to see life from different “cultural lenses” was part of the description of the ideally adapted type, and was seen to some extent in the interviews of the positively and ambiguously adapting respondents as well. In addition, language abilities and satisfying social networks affect adaptation, and communication competence is also an important ability and in connection with the dimensions. Furthermore, those who adapt and decide to stay long periods abroad, regard themselves as always learning more from the experience. For some individuals self-efficacy also played a crucial role in coping in a foreign milieu, and adventurousness was a significant quality to some, even though not for all. I propose that the dimensions, competencies and attributes described above are the basic components for successful adaptation to a multicultural environment.

11.7 METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS

In this study different forms of mixed method designs were used: the data was gathered using a parallel method (qualitative and quantitative at the same time); methodological triangulation (the use of multiple methods) was used to study adaptation, values and empathy; conversion mixed data analysis was used in analysis, and triangulation was used in the results as well as interpreting the results with different theories. I will first review the methodological concerns regarding the qualitative phase and then turn to conversion data analysis validity. Finally, I review the integrative correspondence of the results of the two phases.

11.7.1 CREDIBILITY AND TRANSFERABILITY IN THE QUALITATIVE PHASE

When looking back at the research questions and the results in the qualitative phase, the analyses were conducted rather effortlessly from the current data. The texts offered fruitful data to retrieve the dimensions and types of adaptation, and also values and empathy could be discovered in abundance. This was in part due to the fact that the interview data was substantial. On the other hand, this caused problems, since it took months to first open the interviews and then analyse them, not to mention the time needed to gather 52 interviews. The interviews were transcribed word for word so that all the information was available in the analysis. Flick (2006, 293) has pointed out that the transcript “is the only (version of) reality available to the researchers during their following interpretations.” Moilanen and Rojonen (1994, 7) have also pointed out that in order to avoid the need to return to original tapes in the later phases of analysis, it is worthwhile to pay close attention to the accuracy of the transcript beforehand and to do it with needed accuracy in the first phase. These advice were followed in my study. The rather general questions about life and living in a foreign milieu gave the respondents the liberty to answer the questions without predefined options, and therefore the texts were multifold in meanings and contents. Furthermore, the participants were encouraged to discuss any issues concerning living abroad, also those outside the interview structure. This technique produced new views to be taken into account. The data was rich in both quantity and quality, and therefore a partial transcript would not have worked in this kind of text. The new insights the qualitative data revealed were – as aimed – the interpretations of *change* and more detailed analyses of the dimensions’ *components*, and moreover, *types* of adaptation.

When analysing the qualitative data two particular shortcomings concerning the interview structure were detected. First, self-efficacy was brought up by 40% of the respondents without asking. This indicates the importance of this issue in adaptation. Retrospectively thinking it would have been necessary to bring the subject up by the interviewer. Consequently, the importance of this dimension could have been evaluated accurately. The second shortcoming concerns expectations. Question 20 in the interview concerned expectations before leaving. However, since it was asked retrospectively, and especially the questions about expectations asked retrospectively are widely criticized in the current literature, I decided to omit the answers from the analysis, except where they were connected to other subjects. In addition, an unfortunate aspect of the interviews was the fact that some respondents were so busy they did not have time to answer all the questions. In these cases I was forced to choose which question to leave out when time was running out. I reviewed which topics had been already dealt with at least partially, and concentrated on the ones that had not been discussed at all.

In “Foundations of Mixed Methods Research” Teddlie and Tashakkori highlight the fact that for a researcher it is important to be familiar with the participants, to have cultural knowledge of one’s participants and have a solid knowledge of the current literature concerning the field of study (2009, 289-291). With this background a researcher is prone to enhance the quality and understanding of the results. Having lived years abroad myself, of which the last twelve years in Brussels, being myself an expatriate spouse and being a Finn have given me an advantage in understanding both the expressions and interpretations of the respondents, as well as in interpreting the results. Extensive reading of the current literature has as well helped in referring the results to former studies and comparing the findings in order to bring out the new results discovered in the present study.

Regarding the individuals who participated in this study, I did not know any of them personally beforehand. Some were acquaintances that I had met on some occasions. However, after the interview, some have become my friends and I have occasionally met others in different settings. There were also a few couples who both took part in the study. They were, nevertheless, regarded as individuals in the analysis and each was interviewed separately. Two respondents also lived further away from the Brussels area. However, I decided to keep them in the data, since they had as well different nationalities as neighbours and their work settings corresponded to the study setting. Furthermore, their answers did not stand out as deviating from the data in general, so I saw no reason to exclude them from the study.

Finally, the representativeness of the respondents should be considered in reflection on who volunteered to take part in the study. As often in interviews where people volunteer, who decide to take part and give their time, the sample may be selected in some way. I have already mentioned the possibility

that those who do not adapt may be more reluctant to volunteer. Alternatively, it may also be advantageous to some to be able to share anonymously the difficulties they have faced. As a reminder, uncertainty and negative experiences were also present in the interviews along with the positive sides. Nevertheless, it is also possible that individuals who are active and extrovert in general, more easily take the initiative to take part in this kind of study. Moreover, the majority of respondents were women, and almost all men who participated in this study were either positively adapting or ideally adapted. One can speculate about this finding, if women are more willing to share their ambiguous feelings, or could it be that men with more problems are more likely to return to their own country? In the latter case they would no longer be part of the target group. I could not find any statistics of Brussels expatriates concerning gender distribution, socioeconomic status, educational level, or even age. Consequently, I cannot verify if the sample is representative in these respects.

11.7.2 INFERENCE QUALITY AND TRANSFERABILITY IN THE MIXED PHASE

In mixed methods research inference quality is the term that corresponds to internal validity in quantitative research and credibility in qualitative work; inference transferability corresponds to external validity in quantitative studies and transferability in qualitative studies (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 286-287).

Schwartz and his colleagues' (1999) Portrait Value Questionnaire and Davis's (1994) empathy questionnaire, which were used in this study, have been proven valid in numerous studies before. Based on this, rather low alphas in the values' sum variables were also accepted in this study in Schwartz's value survey. In previous studies this has been justified with the hypothesized associations that support their validity (e.g. Schwartz & Rubel-Lifschitz, 2009). I decided to adapt to this and therefore some alphas in the values' sum variables, even though low, were accepted as such. This was also necessary concerning the comparability to previous studies conducted with the same value survey.

The sample size was one of the major problems in the conversion mixed data analysis phase. It was sufficient to conduct the analyses with non-parametric methods, but splitting the data into smaller units was only possible by forming dichotomies of the dimensions. In the types of adaptation the type "not adapted" was too small to be studied in the statistical measures. Moreover, the language ability and friendship networks were classified in a robust way into three distinguishing categories. Fortunately, these classifications were appropriate, and described accurately enough the data from the qualitative phase. All in all, I am content with the quantifications I

managed to perform on this data, even though only basic statistical analyses could be implemented, and the effects could only be studied independently. Retrospectively thinking, the major problem was the small number of participants for statistical analysis, due to the decision to perform both qualitative and quantitative analyses with the same sample. In mixed methods analysis the quantitative analyses most often include a larger sample and only a few of the participants are chosen for the qualitative phase. However, this method would not have worked for my study, where quantifications were made and compared to quantitative data. Nevertheless, a larger and more heterogeneous sample would have enabled the use of more advanced statistical methods, and consequently the results could have been more generalizable.

Furthermore, as the study includes quantifications from the qualitative data, this data studied with quantitative methods is originally self-reported and concerned with subjectivity. However, it was combined with quantitative data, and the results were supported by several consistencies with current literature, therefore validating the results. These research methods were chosen for this study on the basis of what they could accomplish. As qualitative and mixed methods are routinely utilized to address questions of causality (Karasz & Singelis, 2009) this method was chosen despite the possible limitations it might have.

Concerning the validity of the quantitative phase: as the respondents completed the questionnaires immediately after the interview, it may have had an influence on how the respondents answered the questionnaire. Stelzl and Seligman (2009) showed in their study that Asian-Canadians answered the value questionnaire in different ways depending on whether they were asked to answer as Asian or as Canadian. Following this, the interview concerning expatriate experiences may have influenced the answers so that the respondents answered in accordance with their expatriate status. On the other hand, one can argue they answered as Finns, since many of them brought up their identity as a Finn at the end of the interview. Nevertheless, I decided it was better to first conduct the interview and then the survey, so that the survey questions would not affect the interview. Conducting them both one after another also guaranteed that everyone answered the questionnaire. Had I left it to be collected later or sent separately, the response rate would certainly have been lower than 100%.

11.7.3 INTEGRATIVE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE RESULTS

Each mixed methods study is planned and conducted following the research questions, considering which methodological study design gives the best tools to answer the questions. In this dissertation I studied adaptation using qualitative methods. This was because the former studies dealing with cross-

cultural adaptation have been studied almost exclusively with quantitative methods, and I wished to explore how adaptation can be conceived and interpreted when formed from the interviews and without presumption of current theories. The questionnaires on values and empathy could then be compared to texts and statistical correlations could be searched with converted data. The study design was therefore divergent from the most usual mixed study design, where the qualitative phase follows the quantitative.

I chose triangulation to both methodologies as well as theories. To study adaptation and the confluences with values and empathy I used multiple techniques, and in the results the components of adaptation, Schwartz's individual values (1992) and Davis's aspects of empathy (1994) were connected with each other. In the inference the results of different phases were combined and as a result the components of adaptation to a multicultural environment were summarized. Regarding the correspondence of the results in different phases, the statistical correlations supported the qualitative results. Universalism, self-direction, and low conformity values were connected to adaptation, as well as the empathy aspects of personal distress and perspective taking. These connections could also be seen in the interviews. However, there were several connections that I made based on interviews which were not found in the statistical analyses. This does not mean they would not be valid, though. There are two possible explanations: 1) Taking into account the sample size, adequate amount of significant statistical correlations were found. In a larger sample other correlations that I presumed based on the interviews might be found. 2) The interviews may also tap slightly different aspects of the same phenomenon. Therefore, the conceptual consistencies with values and empathy that I retrieved from the interviews actually added to the knowledge even though they were not found in the current statistical phase. This is one of the advantages of mixed methods study: some phenomenon or correlations may not be found in quantitative/qualitative analysis, yet they may exist, and can be revealed using other methods. As can be recalled, there was also a limitation how the qualitative data could be converted into numerical form. By asking different questions and with a larger sample the conversions might reveal more.

The values and empathy were never asked directly, yet the interviewees lucidly described aspects of perspective taking, (the inverse of) personal distress and empathic concern, as well as values such as universalism, self-direction and the opposite of conformity. Some of these could be found in the statistical analysis when forming different poles of dimensions and comparing three types of adaptation, but others could not. Some statistically significant correlations and more accurate details were nevertheless found in the converted phase. In conclusion, the inference brought new knowledge on the subject with consistencies and additional information. Actual contradictions, which might have been illuminating as well, were not found. One reason for this may be that the focus group in both the qualitative and the quantitative

phase was the same. Inconsistencies in mixed methods study results occur more easily when the focus group is not the same, e.g. when only a few participants are chosen from the quantitative phase to answer the questions in the qualitative phase (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 306). Thus, the design of the methods was appropriate for the questions that were posed. The inference results can be called *complementary*, both phases adding to the knowledge gained from the other phase. Furthermore, the implementation of Schwartz's individual values theory (1992) and Davis's model of empathy aspects (1994) to adaptation worked successfully in the study. And finally, even though theories about adaptation as well as about values and empathy derive from quantitative research, the concepts proved suitable to be implemented in the qualitative phase, as well. For example, in the dichotomy of broadmindedness the concept differentiating the dimension into different poles was practically the same as Davis's (1994) perspective taking, in other words the theoretical concept based on quantitative studies could be applied to the qualitative analysis.

11.8 GENERALIZABILITY OF THE RESULTS

The strong resemblance of the dimensions I found to the current literature and in particular to the multicultural personality (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001), suggest that the results of this study could be generalized, with caution, to similar groups of expatriates in adaptation to a multicultural environment. However, the Finnish cultural background of the respondents in this study, does set limits to this. All nationality and ethnic groups have their own background characteristics, which mould the adaptation process and affect the results. In addition, the sample size, even though ample for qualitative research, does have its limitations concerning the generalizability of the results. At best the results of this study concerning the *process* can be regarded as illuminating the adaptation of Finnish expatriates to Brussels, and probably to other multicultural environments. However, the abilities needed in a multicultural environment that I found are evidently applicable to expatriates of other nationalities, as well, even though the process acquiring them may differ.

11.9 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

From the theoretical point of view several implications related to adaptation to a multicultural environment can be singled out. The first ones concern adaptation itself, the second ones individual values, and the third, aspects of empathy. First, detailed description of the components of adaptation in a multicultural environment as well as types of adaptation based on the

experiences of the research subjects were discovered. Studies concerning individuals in plural societies are numerous. The major topics have been identity (e.g. Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Snauwaert et al., 2003), attitudes toward multiculturalism (e.g. Van de Vijver et al., 2008), and multicultural effectiveness (e.g. Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002). In the present study adaptation to a multicultural environment was investigated by mapping everyday social encounters and the respondents' experiences of daily life, a method rarely found in cross-cultural studies. Therefore, new insights could be gained. Especially how the dimensions broadmindedness, flexibility, and extroversion evolve and intertwine with each other as well as other components, and could be retrieved and presented, brought new aspects to the notion of adaptation. The polarity on the continuums of broadmindedness, flexibility and extroversion indicated new insights in these factors that have not been mentioned in the prevailing theoretical concepts. I was also able to show how the components of adaptation are related to everyday experiences and social encounters, as well as their development along with experiences. Consequently the origins, or the source of development of these components, was brought out in the present study unlike in prior quantitative studies. For instance, in the dimension extroversion striving extroverts described how they had realized through daily experiences that they needed to change their behaviour, and how they had done this, as well its consequences. The same could be seen in other dimensions and components as well. As the respondents talked about the everyday experiences and encounters, they also described their feelings, the consequences of these experiences, as well as the meanings of these events to themselves. On numerous occasions they compared how they had thought previously, gave examples of events, and discussed how they thought and behaved now. The respondents actually analysed their own lives and the impacts of events on themselves. The very source of the components of adaptation could be found from these accounts of daily life and how they were described. Moreover, the illustration of types of adaptation based on motivation and competencies is a new approach to conceptualize adaptation, and has not been implemented before as such. Different typologies were proposed in prior studies conducted mainly in the 1950s, but those typologies differ significantly from the present study. Most of them referred to identification, and they have been criticized as "largely impressionistic" (Church, 1982, 543). Even though the types I presented are prototypes in flux, they were nevertheless formed based on solid components retrieved from the texts, and consequently brought fresh attributes to the studies of adaptation, such as the relevance of ambiguity and motivation in the adaptation process.

Furthermore, despite the fact that this study is not a longitudinal one, the results refer strongly to the fact that the concept of time is related to cross-cultural adaptation, even though it has hitherto been largely neglected in adaptation studies. From a theoretical point of view, the interconnectedness of

timeline, motivation, and different poles of broadmindedness, flexibility, and extrovert should be examined more closely using extensive samples of expatriates. The present study points to the relevance of these concepts in adaptation to a multicultural environment, but with a larger and longitudinal sample their interconnections could be explored in more detail.

Second, I could show the relevance of individual values (Schwartz, 1992) in the adaptation process. In prior studies values have been connected to emigration (e.g. Boneva & Frieze, 2001; Tartakovsky & Schwartz, 2001), adaptation (Bobowik et al. 2011), immigrants' well-being (Roccas et al., 2000), communication styles (Gudykunst et al., 1996), and numerous other issues in the field of cross-cultural studies. In this study I could show the significance of individual values to adaptation in statistical analysis as well as their conceptual connections in the qualitative data. Values (self-direction, universalism, conformity) were linked in the statistical analysis to several components of adaptation. Furthermore, in the qualitative data descriptions of values could be seen. For example, low conformity and universalism were clearly present in the dimension broadmindedness. Especially qualitative studies connecting adaptation and values are rare. The present study showed that individual values (Schwartz, 1992) can also be studied using qualitative methods and that this can bring new perspectives both to the study of values and to adaptation theories.

Furthermore, in this study the value measures included work-related values, which have been used in previous Finnish studies (e.g. Helkama, 2009; Helkama et al., 2012; Myyry & Helkama, 2001). The present findings were consistent with the prior ones in showing that work was positively related to conformity and security. However, as a whole, the pattern of correlations of work-related values with Schwartz's core values differed from earlier findings with regard to two self-transcendence values, universalism and benevolence. Given that universalism was the most important value in the expatriate sample, this unique finding suggests that work can also serve universalistic motivations, to promote the welfare of all people, and not only relate to self-discipline (conformity) and achievement, as in previous research. It is also noteworthy that in the present study achievement was not related to work values at all. These findings point to the possibility that by studying values and their interconnections as well as the relations to different aspects concerning moving abroad one could reveal different motivations to expatriate as well as the reasons for success or failure in adaptation. Following the guideline of Tartakovsky and Schwartz's (2001) theoretical typology of motivations to emigrate based on individual values, and combining the study with the aspects of adaptation, a new model could be found that would point more specifically to different types of expatriate adaptation, encompassing the reasons for moving.

Third, the importance of empathy has been highlighted in previous studies, but I could show that Davis's (1994) model of empathy fits conceptually well

into cross-cultural studies, even though it has not been used as such. Like Schwartz's (1992) individual values theory, Davis's (1994) empathy scale could also be used as a guideline to study aspects of empathy in the qualitative phase, introducing new interpretations to the aspects of empathy. In particular on perspective taking and personal distress the basic theoretical concepts were applicable to the qualitative data and facilitated developing new nuances of these aspects.

11.10 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

When moving from Finland to Brussels one of the major differences individuals face is the multicultural nature of Brussels. Linked to this characteristic, communication competence in a broad sense came up in the interviews. The need for competent communication skills, including knowledge of languages, but also an understanding of various communication styles as well as an understanding of the meaning of different expressions and habits were found to be crucial factors in adaptation. In practice, the prior *awareness of the existence* of these differences proved to be a facilitating factor in adaptation. This means that one does not have to be competent in the beginning to understand the differences but one needs to be aware of the fact there will be differences that may lead to misunderstandings. This advance knowledge as such can help in the adaptation process. The same issue, preparedness for the unexpected, together with a basic knowledge of the environment and information about both institutional issues as well as everyday social encounters can help newcomers to settle more easily and avoid unnecessary feelings of failure. This study gives strong support to the idea that a short briefing would have helped many individuals, especially those who had not lived abroad before, to adapt more easily.

Compared to current theories of adaptation, two dimensions could in particular be linked to adaptation to a *multicultural* environment. In the interviews flexibility and broadmindedness were constantly found to be crucial factors for smooth adaptation, and the lack of them posed problems on several levels. In the texts these two abilities were seen to undergo development and change, so it could be presumed they can be learned consciously as well, at least to some extent. Appropriate training in these two dimensions enables the further acquisition of other aspects needed for adaptation. These two abilities, along with communication competence could also prove useful to those individuals who attend international meetings on a regular basis, even if they do not reside in a foreign environment.

Finally, one issue which has a profound effect on adaptation is the motivation toward change and adaptation. The findings suggest that it affects the acquisition of the skills needed in adaptation. Furthermore, motivation is needed in addition to skills, or adaptation is not successful. This could be seen

in particular amongst the ambiguously adapting type. In chapter 11.1.4 I proposed that motivation and self-efficacy are linked. Most participants who talked about a belief in their own abilities connected it to actual success in adaptation. Evidently the motivation to adapt is higher when one is convinced of one's own abilities, or that one will learn the needed skills. Based on this conclusion I propose that as individuals move to a multicultural environment, they need practical information, knowledge of the skills needed to facilitate the adaptation, and furthermore, *encouragement* in order to motivate them to adapt.

In Brussels multiculturalism is a richness which can bring significant insights to individual lives. Along with the enlargement of the European Union with 10 new member states in 2004, two in 2007, and one more in 2013 the European nationalities are well represented in Brussels with their own characteristics, not to mention numerous nationalities coming from outside Europe. In this diversity of cultures it is both profitable to understand the differences and a prerequisite in order to work and live together and build a better world for the generations to come. My detailed analysis of the components of adaptation indicated topics in which individuals can be advised and supported in order to facilitate adaptation. I claim that the small differences between the nations in Europe should be recognized instead of neglecting them. In the European Union variety is a richness that can become disadvantageous if it is depreciated.

11.11 FUTURE PROSPECTS

Concerning the results of this study, it became apparent that the process of adaptation was distinguishable from the data. To investigate the timeline of this process in more detail, a longitudinal study would be required. This study gave the impression that the process is much longer than that proposed in traditional cross-cultural studies. In earlier studies 18 months was considered a sufficient time (e.g. the numerous studies about the U-curve), whereas in this study it seemed that those who had stayed 18 months to two years were only at the beginning of their settlement. Naturally, it depends on various other factors as well. The situation is different when a student moves to another country for a year by him or herself or if the whole family settles in another country. Yet in adaptation studies in general the time has been almost entirely neglected. Especially a longitudinal study of long-term expatriates would be needed. Furthermore, studies that take into account the age of the persons should be conducted. If a person is leaving abroad in his/her early twenties, the adaptation process is probably very different from that of someone leaving in his/her fifties for the first time.

Furthermore, a study of persons who do not adapt is needed. Concentrating the research uniquely on this group could reveal the reasons for failure in

depth and aid in helping the adaptation when problems arise. Partly connected to this, distant social relationships came up in this study. Improved means of communication to keep contacts with the home country as well as other countries have created a completely new way of providing social support and social networks when abroad. In this study it was already apparent that distant social relationships have become an important part of expatriate lives. This is a topic that would require a study of its own to define the number of these relationships, their impact on adaptation as well as their significance compared to local social networks. This study indicated that they may already be replacing some on-the-site networks.

The concept of self-efficacy has been the topic of cross-cultural studies, and its importance has been compared to other factors. I proposed that self-efficacy and motivation are linked in the adaptation process. This has been shown before by MacNab & Worthley (2011). What is divergent in this study of Brussels expatriates is that there were also individuals to whom self-efficacy appeared detached from the motivation to adapt. The relation between motivation to adaptation and self-efficacy would need further investigation in order to clarify this connection in detail.

Moreover, it would be worthwhile to study expatriates' value rank order longitudinally, and compare it with their own countrymen. I could point out in this study in particular the connections of self-direction to several aspects of adaptation. Universalism and conformity were also connected to certain factors. The rank order was as well illuminating, but I could only speculate about the magnitude of *change* in the value circle. Change was retrievable from the interview data, but longitudinal statistical comparisons were missing. In addition, it would be interesting to compare the importance of different values and their connection to adaptation in homogenous vs heterogenous places of settlement.

It would be useful to know if the findings of this study could also be applicable to other expatriates settling in Brussels, especially those moving from other European countries, or if the results would be divergent. Connected to this, it would be important to study whether expatriates' adaptation is connected to the values endorsed by the culture of origin. And furthermore, in cross-cultural studies should always be remembered the two-way process of actions and their consequences on both the persons who move to a foreign milieu and those in the receiving country. I studied only Finnish expatriates and the impact of the move on them. In larger studies there are examples where the population in the country of settlement has been studied and the impacts compared to changes felt by those moving to the country (e.g. Benet-Martinez et al., 2006; Chen et al., 2008). In Brussels, where foreigners form a high percentage of the population, this must surely have an influence and an impact on local inhabitants' attitudes, values, perceptions and behaviour. I have, however, failed to find this kind of study of Bruxellois while researching the current literature. It would be important to find out the

impact of this kind of multiculturalism on the local people, and not just on individuals who come from elsewhere.

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APPENDIX A

Haastattelurunko

Muista mainita luottamuksellisuus!!!

Kartoitus: ulkomaankomennus oppimiskokemuksena

1. Minkälaisia kohtaamisia ihmisillä on paikallisten/muiden kansallisuuksien kanssa, ja minkälaista on arki
2. Miten elämä eroaa kotimaassa asumisesta, vai eroaako
3. Myös jos osaa kertoa, miten vaikuttanut itseen/muuttanut itseä

Taustakysymykset:

1. Sukupuoli
2. Ikä haastatteluhetkellä/synt vuosi
3. perhesuhteet, perhe mukana vai kotimaassa
4. työpaikka, firma
5. koulutus ja työnkuva
6. koska tullut maahan, kauanko tark olla ja mahdoll. jatkoa
7. onko asunut muualla ulkomailla ennen
8. kielitaito
9. oliko valmennusta ulkommaankomennukselle lähtemiseen ja millaista
10. miksi päätti lähteä

Avaiskysymys, jolla johdatat ajatukset alkuun.

11. miten hankki asunnon

Kerro tässä, että kysymyksissä voi olla toistoa, mutta kun kysytään vähän eri tavoin, voi tulla uusia ajatuksia mieleen.

Sosiaaliset suhteet:

12. keiden kanssa tekemisissä:
 - a) ystävät
 - b) työtoverit,
 - c) lasten koulun/harrastusten kautta,
 - d) omat harrastukset,
 - e) järjestötoimintaa, yms.
 - f) tunnetko naapureitasi

13. Missä ovat parhaat kaverisi?

Vertaa:

14. eroavatko edellä mainitut suhteet siitä mitä kotimaassa?

Anna tässä paperi kulttuuristen tapojen vertailusta, pyydä vastaamaan siltä osin kuin on kokemusta (kys nro 15.a, liite B)

15. b. Kysy vielä tuleeko muita ajatuksia mieleen aiheesta. Ja työssäkäyvillä työtapojen erilaisuudesta/samanlaisuudesta.

Vielä kysymyksiä sosiaalisista suhteista ja käyttäytymisestä:

- 16. tekemisissä paikallisten kanssa
- 17. keiden kanssa helpointa tulla toimeen
- 18. keiden kanssa ja missä tilanteissa käyttäytyminen, tyyli, asenteet poikkeavat eniten

Ja sitten yleisempää, arkielämän vertailua:

- 19. missä tilanteissa elämä eroaa kotimaassa toimimisesta, vai eroaako
- 20. mikä odotusten mukaista, mikä vastaista
- 21. mitä eroja/yhtäläisyyksiä kulttuureissa
- 22. mitä siitä ajattelee, miltä tuntuu
- 23. tuntuuko välillä, että miksei tätäkin asiaa tehdä niin kuin suomessa; miten ajatellut jatkon, miksi tehdään erilailla;
- 24. sama kysymys toisinpäin
- 25. onko enemmän erilaisuutta vai samanlaisuutta

Lähestytään muutosta:

- 26. oletko yrittänyt erityisesti päästä kiinni paikalliseen kulttuuriin, mihin osaan tahansa
- 27. oletko joutunut muuttamaan käyttäytymistäsi/tyyliäsi. Tai onko käyttäytymisesi muuttunut. Jos on, kuvaile, miten ja miksi
- 28. miltä se tuntuu

Lisää kysymyksiä, jos jotain tulee vielä mieleen:

- 29. sopeudutko joukkoon, vai tunnetko itsesi erilaiseksi
- 30. mieti eri ajanjaksoja; tapahtuiko jotain esim. kun juuri saapunut
- 31. onko erityisiä tilanteita, jotka jääneet mieleen ja jotka ehkä muuttaneet itseä, asennetta, arvoja, käytöstä
- 32. tilanteita, joissa ei suorassa kontaktissa, esim. autoillessa – liikennekulttuuri, hallinnolliset asiat, virallisia/muodollisia tilanteita
- 33. onko tullut tilanteita, joissa kenties kulttuurin erilaisuuden takia huomannut, että puhe menee ”ristiin” tai ei kohtaa toisen puhetta/toinen puhuu aidasta, toinen aidanseipästä; miten siitä eteenpäin?

Ja viimeinen kysymys:

- 34. mitä olet oppinut?

APPENDIX B

Kysymys 15 a

Oletko huomannut eroja, miten suomalaiset ja paikalliset/eri kansallisuudet (jos sinulla on esimerkiksi eri kansallisuuksia työtovereinasi tai ystävinäsi) käyttäytyvät seuraavien asioiden suhteen?

- a) Suorapuheisuus: esittävätkö paikalliset/eri kansallisuuksien ihmiset käskyt ja pyynnöt samalla lailla kuin suomalaiset, vai kenties epäsuoremmin, tai suoremmin; entä jos he kieltäytyvät jostakin, sanovatko he sen suoraan vai epäsuorasti?
- b) Oletko huomannut, sanovatko paikalliset/muun maalaiset heitä ylempi-arvoiselle työntekijälle, jos tämä tekee virheen, tai pyrkivätkö välttämään ylempi-arvoisten kritisointia? Entä jos ylemmän tulee huomauttaa alaiselleen jostakin, eroaako se suomalaisesta tyylistä?
- c) Ilmaisevatko paikalliset/muut tuntemasi erimaalaiset mielestäsi negatiiviset tunteensa samalla lailla kuin suomalaiset?
- d) Elehtivätkö paikalliset/muut kansallisuudet enemmän tai vähemmän puhuessaan kuin suomalaiset? Entä poikkeavatko katsekontakti ja fyysinen etäisyys keskustelua käydessä suomalaisesta?
- e) Pidätkö paikallisia/muita muunmaalaisia tuntemiasi ihmisiä yhtä täsmällisinä kuin suomalaisia?
- f) Oletko huomannut eroja siinä, miten toista henkilöä puhutellaan? Muodollisemmin/epämuodollisemmin?

Jos löysit näissä eroja, tuleeko sinulle mieleen joitain tapauksia, joissa tämä olisi aiheuttanut hämmennystä tai ristiriitaa? Tai miten reagoit?

APPENDIX C

Interview structure, living abroad

Remember to mention confidentiality!!!!

The mapping:

1. Which kinds of encounters do people have with locals/other nationalities, and what is your daily life like?
2. How is life different compared to living back home, or is it different?
3. How has living abroad affected/changed you?

Background questions:

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Family relations; is your family here or in your home country (or elsewhere)?
4. Work, enterprise and job description
5. Education, job description
6. When did you arrive; how long do you plan to stay?
7. Prior experience abroad
8. Language proficiency
9. Did you have prior cultural training? If yes, what kind?
10. Why did you decide to leave (Finland)?

Starting question, leading thoughts to the time of arrival:

11. How did you find your apartment/house?

Say at this point that some questions may be quite similar, but sometimes new ideas come to mind when asking again in a slightly different way.

Social relationships:

12. Tell me about your contacts, friends, acquaintances and about these relationships:
 - a) who do you have as friends
 - b) workmates
 - c) through your children's school/hobbies
 - d) own hobbies
 - e) organizational activities, etc.
 - f) do you know your neighbours
13. Where do your best friends live?

Compare:

14. Do the relationships here differ from the ones back home? If so, how?

At this point give the questions about cultural behavioural comparisons and ask the interviewee to answer to his/her best abilities about things he/she has experience about. (Question 15a, Appendix D).

15. b. Continue by asking if the interviewee has further thoughts about the subject. And for those who work, about differences/similarities in working methods.

Some further questions about relationships and behaviour:

16. Do you have contacts with local people?
17. Who are the people you find easiest to get along with?
18. With whom and in which situations do you find the behaviour, style and attitudes most different from what you are used to?

And then to more general subjects in everyday life. Some comparisons:

19. How are life and everyday activities different from those back home? (Or is it the same?)
20. Has this been what you expected? Or did you expect something else?
21. What differences and on the other hand similarities have you noticed in culture and in life in general compared to Finland?
22. What do you think about it? How does it feel?
23. Do you sometimes ask yourself that why is this thing not done like it is in Finland? If you do, elaborate on your thoughts?
24. And do you sometimes ask yourself why is this thing not done in Finland the way it is done here? Elaborate on your thoughts if you do.
25. Do you ultimately find life more similar or more different here?

Getting closer to change:

26. Have you tried to enter into local culture and life somehow? I am interested in everything possible.
27. While living abroad, have you needed to change your behaviour or style somehow? Or do you feel you have changed, but not "forcefully"? If you have changed, describe this change, how and why?
28. How does it feel?

Some more questions, maybe something more comes to your mind:

29. Do you "fit in" or do you feel different?
30. If you think back about your life while living abroad, are there some happenings, events or incidents that you remember best? Some strong first impressions, for example?

31. Do you remember some incidents that have been so remarkable that you feel you actually changed as a result? Changed your behaviour, attitude, values or your own self-concept?
32. Do you feel the culture is the same or different here, for example in traffic or in some other everyday events? In administrative matters? Some formal occasions? (Ask these only if they did not come up earlier.)
33. Have you been in a situation where you notice that you are discussing with someone but in fact you are speaking about different issue, so that your ideas do not meet? If so, how have you tried to solve the situation?

And one last question?

34. What have you learned?

APPENDIX D

Cultural behaviour patterns, question 15 a.

Have you noticed any differences in how Finns and locals/other nationalities behave concerning the following issues (if you have other nationalities as your workmates or friends):

- a) Outspokenness. Do locals and other nationalities give orders or ask favours in the same way as Finns, or perhaps more indirectly/directly? And if they decline something, do they say it directly or indirectly?
- b) Have you noticed, do the locals/other nationalities tell their superior if he/she makes a mistake, or do they try to avoid criticizing their superiors? How about if the superior makes a comment to a subordinate about something, is it different from the Finnish style?
- c) Do locals/other nationalities express their negative feelings in the same way as Finns?
- d) Do locals/other nationalities use non-verbal signals more or less in their speech than Finns? How about eye contact and personal space in conversations, are they different?
- e) Do you regard locals and other nationalities as being as punctual as Finns?
- f) Have you noticed differences in forms of address? Are they more or less formal?

If you found some differences, do you recall, whether they have raised some bafflement or conflict? How did you react?